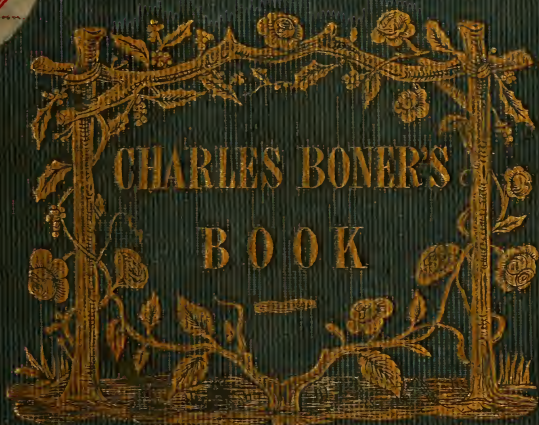


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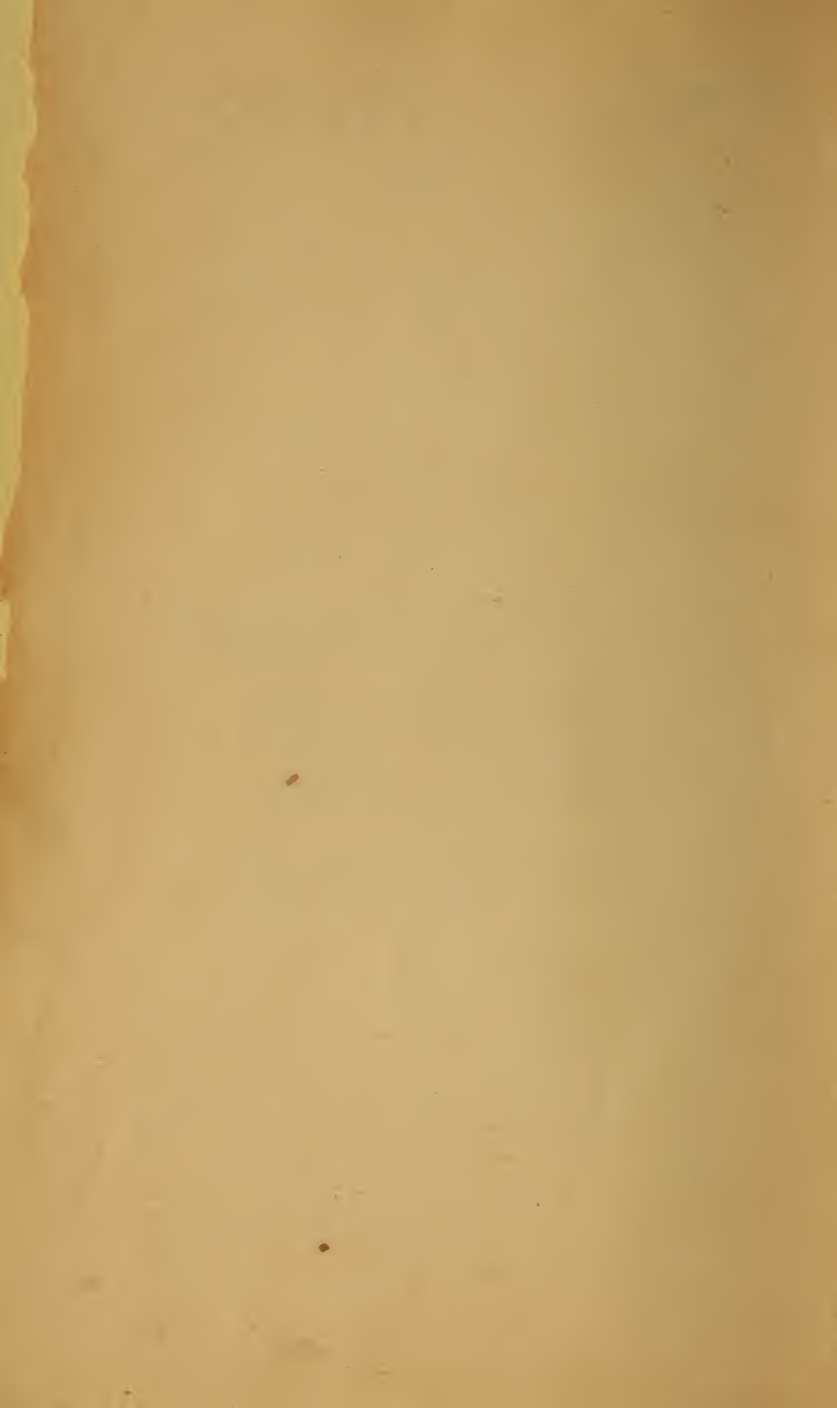
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THE CRUSADER.

CHARLES BUNER'S BOOK

FOR THOSE WHO'RE YOUNG & THOSE WHO LOVE
WHAT'S NATURAL AND TRUTHFUL

IF OLD IN YEARS YET YOUNG IN HEART
TIS THAT WHICH MUST BE YOUTHFUL

WITH

BY

ILLUSTRATIONS

COUNT POCCI

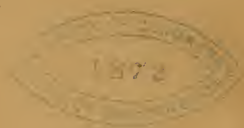


LONDON CHAPMAN & HALL 126 STRAND

CHARLES BONER'S BOOK



For those who're young, and those who love
What's natural and truthful:
If old in years, yet young in heart —
'Tis *THAT* which must be youthful.



WITH NUMEROUS ILLUSTRATIONS BY

Count Pocci, of Munich.



London :

CHAPMAN AND HALL, 186 STRAND.



MDCCCXLVIII.



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* Translated from an unpublished volume of His Serene Highness Prince Frederic von S—g.
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* Also from his Serene Highness's unpublished volume.



To my Young Readers.



MY DEAR LITTLE FRIENDS,



ALL of you will, no doubt, recollect—for, of course, I consider there is not one of you but has read the book—the words with which the preface to my “Tales from Denmark” concluded: “I hope soon to meet you all again.” And now that wish is gratified. Moreover, what I now bring you for Christmas is chiefly of my own writing, a circumstance which greatly enhanced the pleasure of getting the book ready for you; for in making a present to those one likes, one feels quite differently—one is so much more glad to offer what is really one’s very

own, even though it be a trifle, than when bringing something which, after all, is the work of another. I had intended, however, to have given you a new story by Andersen—for his fairy tales delight me as much as they do you, and nothing gives me more pleasure than to translate them for the children of England—but I have been disappointed in receiving it: so you must have it another time.

And as I feared that what I alone could bring might not be found sufficiently varied or amusing, I have taken a story or two (“Trine,” “The most difficult Path,” &c.) from a work that was written for a dear brother only and some few friends of the author, and which, therefore, has never been given to the public. The story of “Trine” will doubtless please you: perhaps you did not know before that out in the wild North Sea was a bit of English ground. The author has written accounts of many a strange scene besides; for his life has been an eventful one; that of an adventurous rover about the world—to-day in the brilliant drawing-rooms of Paris or Vienna, and shortly after among the

banditti of Catalonia, or bivouacking with the troops around a crackling fire at the foot of Mount Atlas, and keeping a sharp look-out against a surprise from the Kabyles, or some other prowling tribe friendly to Abdel-Kader.

As to the other stories and the ballads from my pen, I most sincerely wish that you may like them. It is about your criticism that I care more than any other—though you need not mention this, lest certain personages, who shall be nameless, might take offence—and if *you* receive favourably what was intended for you, that is praise enough for me, and is, indeed, the very praise I want.

If the book do please you, you must let me know; and then, should you wish it, I will see if, with Count Pocci's kind assistance, I can get another volume ready for next year, which would certainly be quite as pretty as this. I have all sorts of things in my head for another book, and I know that Count Pocci has too: so you have only to say that you would like it, and we both will set to work and do our best to please

you. By that time also I shall have a new story from Andersen.

So now the matter is entirely in your hands, and there I leave it. Farewell, then, for the present; and may you all have a right happy Christmas, and plenty of laughing, and jokes, and merry games—not forgetting blind-man's-buff, for that is the best of all.

CHARLES BONER.

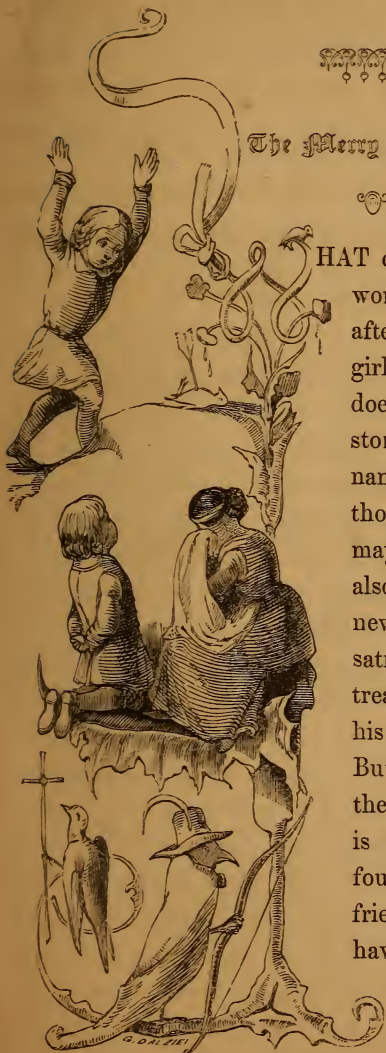
ST. EMERAM, RATISBON,
November 3, 1847.



CHARLES BONER'S BOOK.



The Merry Wedding.



HAT child is there, what man or woman is there—for they too, after all, were little boys and girls themselves once—that does not know the affecting story of “Cock Robin?” The names of the Sages of Greece, though we once knew them, may be now forgotten; some also, no doubt, there be who never even heard of the proud satrap Artabazus, nor of Xerxes, treacherously assassinated by his own captain, Artabanus. But who is there to whom the name of “Cock Robin” is not familiar; he who was foully murdered by his own friend, the Sparrow? And who, having once heard the tale, ever ceased to remember it? Are not even the very words of

the ruthless assassin, daringly bold as they are, still current throughout the land? To the question, so full of incredulous astonishment, "Who killed Cock Robin?" we have the reply, unparalleled in its effrontery :

"I," said the Sparrow,
"With my bow and arrow,
And I killed Cock Robin!"

No remorse, no repentance! but seemingly glorying in the crime; telling even, with shocking indifference, the manner of its committal: "With my bow and arrow."

It is pleasing to turn from such hardened wickedness to the sympathy shewn by all the creatures when they learn the loss they have sustained. That his death did very sorely grieve them, we cannot for a moment doubt; for it was one among themselves who had committed the savage deed; and they all therefore eagerly came forward to testify their sorrow, and, by such public demonstration of respect, to mark, at the same time, their abhorrence of the murder. Men, you know, have their demonstrations as well as birds.

It was a double murder; for not only was Cock Robin killed, but, in his death, Friendship also suffered a mortal wound. They had been friends in youth; and this circumstance but serves to make the deed of blood more tragical. Cæsar, the great Cæsar, was also assassinated; and, lamentable as was the event, the knowledge that it was his friend Brutus's hand that struck him to the heart excites emotions still more painful. So it is with Robin. To this day the cause of quarrel between him and his murderer is unknown. In the solitude of the forest his death was accomplished; and when the Fly who "saw him die" came to his assistance, he

was, it is evident, too far gone to be able to give an account of the catastrophe. Had he in his last moments uttered a word to clear up the mystery that enveloped his end, it would most certainly have come down to us, for the little Fish who caught his blood was also present. This was, we may well suppose, some gentle crimson-speckled troutlet, who had often listened to his sweet pipings while floating dreamily on the surface of the sunny stream beneath the branches where Robin was disporting himself.

That he was of most amiable character and generally beloved is shewn by the readiness with which all the creatures proffer their services to aid at his funeral and to shew him honour. Even the sturdy Bull lends his strength for his service: he tolls the bell, because, as he says, he is powerful, and "can pull." The Beetle volunteers the sad task of making his shroud; sewn together probably of withered leaves. The Owl offers to dig his grave. The ever-rejoicing Lark is not on this day heard on high: he remains on earth to perform the duty of clerk beside the grave of his friend. "If 'tis not in the dark," he adds; feeling, as he does, that the gloom of night would be too much for one accustomed, like himself, to go forth to meet the morn. The Dove, already deeply afflicted by a recent bereavement, offers to be chief mourner. "She mourned for her love," we are told; and there is something so sacred in grief, that none would pain her by refusing her wish, and so she was chief mourner. The Thrush, who had never done such a thing before, volunteered a psalm; and, though it was evident he did not know the tune, the offer proves how kindly he, as well as his friends, was disposed to poor Cock Robin. The bell at

length tolled; and then, unable any longer to control their emotion,

“ All the birds fell
To sighing and sobbing.”

Sweet consolation, to find true worth so feelingly deplored !



But we have unconsciously forgotten “The Merry Wedding.” Reminiscences of our childhood-days, long, alas ! very long since gone by, have arisen in our mind, and we were well pleased to dwell on them a while, and again live over that fresh primal time, when our heart was touched and withal delighted by this most delectable of ballads ; which even yet, a somewhat silvered though our head now be, has had power to arrest us. “So, Cock Robin, farewell.”

That such rhymes, in which the various animals are made to speak and to perform a part, were prevalent in remote times and among remote nations, is shewn by the circumstance that a song, not unlike the one in question, is to be found among the “Songs of the Vandals,” and called

The Merry Wedding.

Who shall be bride ?
The Owl shall be bride.
But the Owl said :

I am a very ugly creature,
I cannot be bride;
No, I cannot be bride.

Who shall be bridegroom?
The Wren shall be bridegroom.
But the Wren said:
I am a very little fellow,
I cannot be bridegroom;
No, I cannot be bridegroom.

Who shall be bridesman?
The Crow shall be bridesman.
But the Crow said:
I am a very black fellow,
I cannot be bridesman;
No, I cannot be bridesman.

Who shall be cook?
The Wolf shall be cook.
But the Wolf said:
I am a very cunning fellow,
I cannot be cook;
No, I cannot be cook.

Who shall be cup-bearer?
The Hare shall be cup-bearer.
But the Hare said:
I am a very quick fellow,
I cannot be cup-bearer;
No, I cannot be cup-bearer.

Who shall be piper?
The Stork shall be piper.
But the Stork said:
I have a great bill,
I cannot well be piper;
No, I cannot well be piper.

Who shall be table?
The Fox shall be table.
But the Fox said:
Cut off my tail,
That will make your table;
Yes, that will make your table.

But there is, however, a material difference in the spirit manifested in the two songs. In the former one we see that every creature came forward willingly to shew the deceased honour; with fraternal love each fellow-bird volunteered a kindly service. Thus it is when we leave behind us an unblemished name, and have lived lovingly and in good fellowship with those around us. In those early days, whence we derive the other ballad, such sweet harmony reigned not amongst the creatures. It presents us a sad picture of those times: no meek forbearance, no gentle yielding to the will of another, which makes intercourse between bird and bird so full of enjoyment. The offer of the Fox is no exception, for it is evidently nothing but a mockery; he, of course, never having the least intention of giving his brush to be used as a table. There was not, therefore, one willing to aid at the Owl's nuptials; and we have reason to believe it was this circumstance which, deeply wounding her too-sensitive feelings, inclined her ever after to a life of melancholy and seclusion. An English poet, with a total absence of all proper sympathy, as well as gallantry, calls this "moping."

Antiquarians are assuredly right in setting such value on the popular rhymes, stories, and traditions of ancient people, asserting as they do with great justice, that they often throw light on matters which, but for some old song, would remain obscure. "They serve to perpetuate," as no less a person

than Sir Walter Scott most justly observes, “a great deal of what is rare and valuable in ancient manners, and to record many curious and minute facts, which could have been preserved and conveyed in no other manner.” Is not the state of things in those hoary times of Vandal existence illumined by this one ballad? Is not a flood of light flung on the social intercourse of those days? Little edifying as the picture is, it must, however, afford much satisfaction; for by it we are enabled to see the great improvement in manners and the humanities that has taken place since then.

The Wren, who refused to be bridegroom on account of his diminutive size—a paltry excuse, as if there were not thousands of little men who had large wives and large families—has in later days seen his folly, and we find him, with Mrs. Wren, holding the pall at his friend’s funeral.

And so on with the rest. Despite the manner of Cock Robin’s death, we may assert that all have become more civilised, and the great human family have happily, at the same time, advanced in civilisation also.





The Mother's Morning Song to her Child.

WAKE, wake, my little one, wake and see
How the glad sun is looking for thee ;
Looking for thee full an hour or more
Among thy playthings upon the floor ;
Then gently creeping up towards thy bed,
And playing around thy unconscious head,
And kissing thy cheek so fresh and rosy,
Making it look like a July posy,
And touching thy eyelids, where still he lingers,
As gently as even thy mother's fingers.
He wants thee up and abroad to see
How bravely he comes, and to hear the glee

That rings from each bush and from up on high,
And tells that a lark must be in the sky.
He creepeth along on thy chamber wall,
And lighteth it up like a festal hall ;
But ever in silence, without a sound,
He flingeth, all golden, his splendour round.
And then quite impatient at what thou'rt losing,
Nor caring aught for thy liking or choosing,
He tells the rose and the jasmine too,
So in at the window they peep to view ;
And still farther in come waving and bending,
The fragrance of morning around thee sending.
As the breeze glides on, the rose nods her head,
To shew him the boy that is still in bed,
And her shadow plays on his face and eyes,
As the sweet flow'r thus to awake him tries.
And here is the bee too—she's just flown in,
To try to arouse thee with buzzing din ;
To tell how the morning is bright and sunny,
And say she's gone home with a load of honey.

Ha ! ha ! thou'rt awake now !—Come, come, no pouting,
That fresh rosy mouth should have long been shouting,
And sending a greeting distinct and loud
Up high to the lark in his pearly cloud ;
But still on the jasmine some dewdrops glisten,
The birds are still calling thee—hark now—listen !
He's coming, blithe birds ! Now then, quick, away !
And carol as loudly and glad as they !

To
The Swallow.



HALLOO ! halloo ! little swallow,
Thou dost seem quite drunk with
joy !

Wilt thou calmer be to-morrow,
Or thy little day employ

Thus pursuing of thy fellows
Over river, bank, and lea,
Over all the flow'ry meadows,
In this heart-felt jollity ?

Now on earth and now in heaven,
Now just hid behind a cloud,
Now downwards by thy playmates
driven,
With that cry so sharp and loud.

Thou art right, thou happy creature,
Shout with gladness on thy flight,
Take thy fill of sunny nature,
Fly, shout on with all thy might !

Man from thee might wisdom bor-
row, [ger ;
Thou, the spring's first messen-
Though thou know'st it not, my
swallow,
Thou art a philosopher.



THE FIRST TEAR.



ONCE upon a time—it was a very long time ago, I dare say, for such things, of course, never occur now-a-days—there was a very beautiful pair of eyes; and what is more, they were blue, really blue, and not of some other colour called so from mere complaisance. They were accompanied, too, by much else that was beautiful, and which did the heart good to look upon—a cheek as fair; but as it is with the eyes only that we have to do, we will leave all beside undescribed.

You will no doubt think that I am very fond of eyes, having begun another story by talking about them. To tell the truth, I *am* fond of them, and I have gazed on so many, and some have made such an impression upon me, that at times I am haunted by them; and I suppose it is this circumstance which forces me so often to choose them for my theme. It is a sad affair to be thus haunted by anything—by eyes or by hob-goblins: and you may read of the like in Walter Scott's book on Demonology and Witchcraft.

Well, the eyes I now speak of were a lady's eyes; and they were such as, according to all received tales of fairy and

the olden time, could only be those of a king's daughter. And they were so.

Now it happened from some cause or another, which not even the court physician was able to determine, and he was the very wisest man in the whole palace, that the eyes of the princess were never turned downward. They looked straight forward, and they looked up, and to the right, and to the left, but on what was lower than themselves they never looked. But this was not from pride,—it was a habit the eyes had contracted, and which they still retained. All the maids of honour, and the chamberlains, and all the other gentlemen of the royal household said that was not necessary for the eyes of a princess; but the king, who was a wise old man, though, of course, not so clever as the physician, was vexed at the report, and inquired if it were really true. That it was true all agreed, and there was equal unanimity in deciding that such beautiful blue eyes were right in not caring to look on what was not at least as high up as themselves. One only of the princess's handmaidens, of whom the old king inquired, said that her mistress's eyes *could* turn earthwards, although they never did; “and very right they were,” she added, with rather a saucy look at his venerable majesty; for, as she remembered, they had deigned to do so once some months before, in order to admire a pair of gold-embroidered slippers which covered each small princely foot as it rested on a silken cushion.

The slippers in question had been brought from the East by one of the handsomest young cavaliers of the court, who had vowed that his first deeds in arms should be achieved against the Paynim.

The good old king from being vexed grew angry when he

found that his daughter's eyes really did never look earthwards; and he severely scolded all who had had charge of her from childhood. First the nurse was blamed for having tolerated, or may be even induced, such a defect; then the governess received a reprimand for not having corrected it; and the dancing-master was told a heavy responsibility lay on him for having, year after year, passed it over unnoticed. They all excused themselves as best they could; the nurse asserting the impossibility of its being her fault, while the king said sternly she was most to blame; and perhaps he was right.

Thus summer after summer passed, and these lovely eyes enjoyed many sights of beauty; they saw the tall trees bending and waving in the breeze; they looked forth at night when all was calm and clear, and watched the stars with a longing new and undefinable; or they gazed in admiring delight upon the distant line of hills when the sun had passed the meridian; while above the wondrous blue of the horizon, like icebergs from an ocean, rose snowy peaks and glaciers. But many other things of earth, most fair to see, they had never beheld. Flowers they never saw growing, unless they happened to be those of some tree or shrub of about the height of the eyes themselves; yet, nevertheless, they feasted on the beauty of the rarest exotics, and revelled in the tints of their glowing buds and blossoms. These were gathered daily for their pleasure, and the rooms and the balcony where they tarried were adorned with them. Moreover, to those blue eyes, as before a shrine, some blushing wreath of exceeding beauty was not seldom offered; and each votary who there worshipped deemed himself blessed if at such time the sunlight of a bland smile had fallen on the offering.

And they loved, too,

“ to watch the moon at night,
Gliding, all queen-like, through a sky unclouded ;”

to look up at the graceful waving of a flag when the wind blows strongly ; and to see the tapering mast of some brave frigate, as, inclining before the breeze, it moved majestically across the bay. They loved, too, to watch the rainbow as it grew into the sky, and would dwell in ecstasy on the coloured light as it shone in the face of heaven. But they never saw the gloom that had preceded such phenomena ; they were only allowed to look on what was bright and glad. They were shewn the rainbow, but not the lowering cloud.

And in all such sights those eyes took real pleasure and delight. They were calm lakes in which the sky is mirrored when all is fair and sunny. And as you look down into the deep water, and give way to thought till you forget that you are looking, so you might gaze into those depths of blue till your heart would be moved by good and holy and pleasurable emotions. For you saw that heaven was reflected there : a pure soul shone forth from that serene profundity, like the mass of light which seems enshrined in pure waters, as though it were a part even of the clear element. But, alas, there was still that one defect—they never were cast downwards.

And so years passed on. The court physician consulted with another court physician ; but still the cause of the strange defect in the princess's eyes could not be discovered. It had been strictly forbidden, under pain of instant disgrace, ever to mention the malady to the princess herself, for fear of hurting her feelings ; and as she was not aware that her eyes had any

peculiarity, or never looked downwards, the physician said, under such circumstances, his art could avail nothing.

One day the princess, attended by her ladies and all the high personages of the court, went into the country on an excursion which had been planned some weeks before. They were to take nothing to eat with them—though, no doubt, there was a store in reserve for the princess, in case no provisions were to be got; but they were to trust to what they might be able to procure from the cottagers—bread, fruits, milk, and honey; and they were, besides, to look for the wild strawberries, of which they had been told there were abundance in the woods. Now it was just this uncertainty that caused the agreeable excitement felt that day by all; for you must know that at courts people are glad of any pretext whatever for breaking the dull monotony of their life.

In the open air the blue eyes of the princess were enjoying all they saw,—now watching the pearly clouds, now the lark as it bounded upwards into the sky. And they presently looked towards two other eyes: these were dark, and sent forth beams as burning as the sun at noon-tide; they were the eyes, meseems, of him who had fought in Palestine, and had added fresh green leaves to the laurel-wreaths already won by his illustrious race. But their fiery light was now subdued, as they contemplated, with an expression not to be mistaken, the artless face of one of the princess's attendants, who, unconscious of the gaze, was arranging a posy of wild flowers she had been gathering on the meadow and in the hedge-row.

Then suddenly over those beautiful blue depths, where the bright heaven was reflected, a thin cloud seemed passing.

Those eyes were still effulgent; but it was the subdued light of the sun when it is veiled for a moment by a silvery summer shower; when the brightness is no longer concentrated, but diffused, and falling in moisture on the earth beneath.

And on the eyelash you saw a large drop trembling, poisoning itself as though endeavouring not to fall; but it grows larger, it rolls down, and, as it falls, the glittering gem is dashed to pieces on the burning cheek. IT WAS THE FIRST TEAR THAT HAD FALLEN FROM THOSE EYES!—"But if any one should see it!" And the princess,—fearful lest it might be observed, and struggling to check another, which she felt was, in spite of herself, about to overflow its boundary,—called all the strength of her womanhood to her aid; she made a desperate effort; the eyelid descended, concealed the tearful eyes, and she looked downwards on the ground!

At her feet grew the dark-blue dwarf gentian and the wild violet; and every where from amid the grass bright golden eyes peered upward to meet hers with kind and friendly look. In the round open face of the daisy there was something that pleased the princess; and she stooped down, plucked the simple flower, and placed it in her bosom.

From that hour a new world seemed opened to those lovely eyes. They saw many things they had never seen before, or had only viewed from afar, because they were not on a level with themselves. Till now they had seen the butterfly only when, in gayest colours, it fluttered in the sun; they now could see it when, as a chrysalis, it lay in insignificance in the dust. And they saw, too, how many of the

most fragrant flowers grow near the ground, and that not all, like the delicate orange-blossom, are lifted on a high stem above the common mould. But yet they were flowers, although she had never beheld such till now; for these were never gathered for her delight or ornament, but only the rarer ones which the care of the most skilful gardeners had reared. For all that, however, these humbler ones, as the princess now found, possessed a loveliness of their own: though lowly, they were, as well as the others, the creation of the hand of God. And they saw hundreds of things beside, which they had not viewed till then, because they were not high enough, and because those eyes were unable until now to bend downwards.

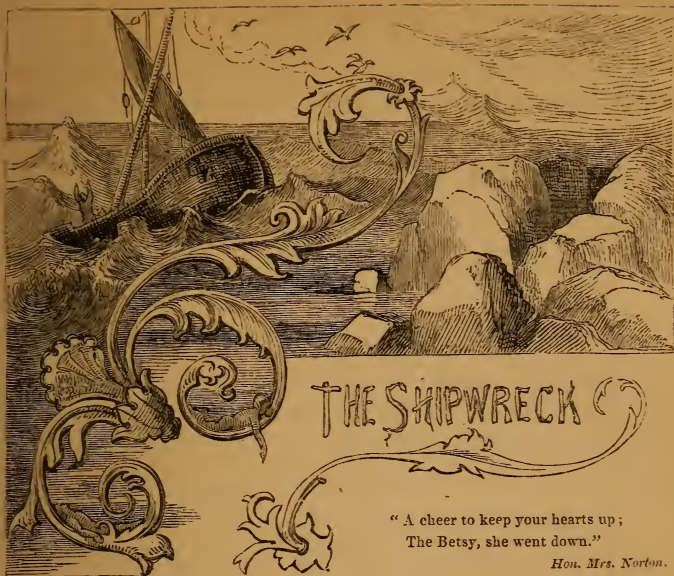
But their greatest source of joy was to look upon the little children and the poor widows and grey-headed men who knelt to the princess as she passed, and to see their grateful countenances, and their eyes that at once spoke prayers and blessings. And all this was new to them; heretofore they had overlooked such sights.

And it seemed as though the delight the eyes experienced was communicated to the heart; or it might be that the daisy had some mystic power; for, strange to say, the princess henceforward felt a happiness she had never experienced till now; and ever afterwards her bright eyes, which had become, so all people said, more lovely since their cure, were turned as frequently on what was below them as on the loftier objects which were on a level with or above them.

But no one was happier at the wonderful change than the good old king; and when the princess told him—though that she did only a long time afterwards—of the little circumstance

by which the wonder had been effected, he pressed his daughter to his bosom, and, kissing her smooth cheek, said, “ How much do we owe, my child,—how thankful should we be, to that FIRST TEAR !”





Ein Seemann muß lieben sein Schiß so iuß,
Als ob's seine eigene Mutter wär. MÜHLER.

"His ship to a sailor should be as dear
As though she his very own mother were."



HIGH swelled the waves, and the winds blew high,
And there was not a star in the murky sky ;
And on the ship rushed, hither and thither,
Wildly and darkly, and none knew whither.
Oh ! 'twas a dreadful and horrid flight
Our poor ship took on that fatal night,
Galloping on like a frightened thing,
In speed outstripping the petrel's wing.

And the winds followed after, and fore, and about,
Mingling all things in a horrible rout.

And she flew on and on, as the myriads fly
O'er wasted lands when the conqueror's nigh ;
Plunging, perchance, into a worse strife,
While thus madly striving to save their life.

Just so we were borne on with furious speed,
And God could but help us in our great need ;
Yet in the whole ship was not heard a groan,
Each warm living heart seemed now turn'd to stone.
The awe of the danger had made Fear dumb,
The senses were living, the life's blood numb ;
Only the ship, as she rush'd through the surge,
Moan'd long and deeply, as though 'twere her dirge.
The women—from them was no wailing heard—
Look'd on each other, but uttered no word.
Amidst crushing sorrows, in hours of fear,
Woman, I wean, then is oft man's compeer ;
Though dragged to the dust, and there left to die,
What's her repining? She has none save a sigh.

And still none uttered nor shriek nor cry,
As louder and louder the blast roared by.
The pale lip compressed, and wide open eye,
Marked Terror's demoniac mastery ;
And each sense seemed stretched to the fullest strain
To catch at a something like Hope—in vain ;
E'en Hope could not live upon that wild main.

And the list'ning sailor held in his breath,
As he fancied he caught the low wail of Death,
Distinctly, though faintly, heard over the strife
Of elements striving to clutch his life.
Now, now then again he hears the faint shriek,
And his fear-drugged ear hears a death-wraith speak.

The cordage he grasps with convulsive strain,
And his blood runs cold athrough every vein ;
The nostril distended, the jaw clenched fast,
Urge Nature to strive and hold to the last.
His round staring eyeball he lifts on high,
And there, where the rags of the mainsheet fly
High in the air, indistinctly flitting
Around the mast which at last is splitting,
He sees clear against the black driving clouds
The Spirits of Ocean in watery shrouds.
Then seeks he no longer to pierce the gloom ;
His heart beats much slower—he waits his doom.

But could he have witnessed the scene below,
Where Life seemed held under a spell by Woe,
He had sprung in dread from that floating tomb ;
For 'twas as though Earth had opened her womb,
Disclosing her corpses in row and rank
As they looked when living, but stiff and blank.
He well could have thought 'twas their freed spirit
That hover'd o'er and pursued the frigate ;
Which followed still where their mortal shell
Sat staring like motionless sentinel.

There, perched on the stern, sate the petrel bird,
Calm, motionless, solemn ; nor was there heard
The shrill cry it utters, as o'er the waste
It speedeth along with a wond'rous haste.

The sailors they saw it each one and all ;
They wished it away, but they durst not call
Or shout to the creature that had come in—
They knew what would follow on such a sin.
And still it sat there, nor it moved nor stirred ;
There was something ghostly in that mute bird ;
'Twas like entertaining a fiend as guest,
Who stays in your house while you go to rest.

And thus we drove on, without hope or notion
How we might combat against the ocean.
And thunders were rolling above, around,
Groans seemed to rise up from the ocean ground :
The lightnings were flashing through horrid rents,
That tore the clouds open to get them vents,
And whirled through the sky, and seemed to skip
With certain destruction upon our ship.
And then came another dread clap of thunder,
As though the wide world were riven asunder.
The whirl of the tempest, the blast that rushed,
Was drowned in that one roar, and all seemed hush'd.
Each man that was there for a moment shrank :
All thought that the ship was torn plank from plank,
And then for an instant a lurid glare—
My God ! 'twas a moment of wild despair,

For now, just a-head, we saw such a sight
As never was seen but on that one night.
In front of that terrible sheet of flame,
And spectral and ghastly, towards us came
A ship, like a wreck uprisen again
To gallop once more through storm o'er the main.
But just at that moment she changed her course ;
That ship rushed on like a furious horse.
Yes, full in our sight stood that wizzard thing ;
Our ship, as by instinct, gave one long swing,
And then, in a second, the ship rushed by.
From out her arose a long piercing cry ;
'Twas a thrilling shriek of desolate woe—
Methought I had never heard man cry so ;
It neither the rain nor wind could smother.
Then came a red flash, and then another,
Dispelling a moment the heavy gloom,
And lighting that ship to her dreadful tomb.
Perchance they thought soon the storm would cease ;
I had much rather they held their peace,
For their voice fell so hollow upon my ear,
It caused me a feeling akin to fear.

Well, day came at last, and the sea grew still ;
But all was not over ;—a greater ill
Was yet in reserve, and when things seemed bright.
The whole of that long and terrible night
Not a plank there was but did strain and creak,
And we found that the ship had sprung a leak.

We got out the boats, and we left the home
That bounding had carried us over the foam.
'Twas a pitiful thing for us, her crew,
Thus to desert her ; but what could we do ?
We said not a word, for we could not speak ;
The heart of each one felt as though 'twould break.
We still looked at her as off we rowed,
While round her the waters now higher flow'd.
She suddenly lurched, and we saw she was sinking :
Alas ! at that moment each one was thinking
Of many a joy and many a bout
He'd had in that ship or had weathered out ;
And days that were gone and scenes that were past,
All crowded on memory thick and fast.
She rose, as to give us a parting look
Before that last finishing plunge she took ;
And then, like an arrow shot from a bow,
Down, down in the waters we saw her go.

We knew all was over, but still we peered
Out into the darkness the while we neared
The eddy vortex where she had sunk ;
Which sucked us on, as it had not drunk
Enough yet of life, but still would swallow
Some victims more in its whirlpool hollow.
But the waves soon rolled over that fated place :
All was wild as before ; there was left no trace
Of that spirit-like ship nor her shrieking crew—
She passed like the words I am telling you.

She seemed come on the lightning, and then she went
As the white spray flies when a wave is rent ;
And from where thus ended such fear and trouble
There rose but a gurgling and half-choked bubble.

At last God had mercy upon us all :
By little and little the wind did fall.
The night, which to each one had seemed a week,
Sunk back in the gloom :—some began to speak.
We lay on our oars a minute or so,
To see the last of her and watch her go.
At her seams the water now fast flowed through ;
Ah ! while she was filling, our eyes filled too !

She went at last—and we watched her end,
And felt as we all had lost a friend ;
Still looked at the place, heaved a deep, deep sigh,
And sadly rowed on to some land just nigh.



RHYMES.



A rhyme sometimes will keep from tripping,
And hold you up just when you 're slipping.



O all things openly, and like a
man ;
If five years old, or fifty, this
you can.



Give with your alms kind words—'tis not much trouble ;
This, or kind looks, will make your bounty double.



When you 're alone, then think that a beholder
Of what you do is standing at your shoulder.



FOUL words defile the mouth, which,
as I think,
Should be a fountain-head, and
not a sink.



Pray, who made you a judge? put off the wig;
You look quite foolish when you look so big.



LET others' faults remind you of
your failing:
You may fall sick, though per-
haps just now not ailing.



A NIGHT-SCENE IN POLAND.

A Ghost Story.



THERE is a sort of fear against which ordinary courage is of no avail. Courage relates in general to the opposing and despising dangers in the outer world, in the world of reality. One may be able coolly to await the cannon-ball that is to dash us to pieces ; one may look calmly upon the dark raging flood that may soon wash away the drowning swimmer ; one may glance downward into the abyss which yawns beneath our unsteady footpath ;—and yet not be able to master the feelings of dread which creep over us when appearances take place which reason cannot explain, and experience is unable to designate.

The writer of these pages has experienced the like ; and since that time, when people laugh at the fear of those individuals who are overcome by a dread of ghosts, he knocks at his own breast, and laughs not with the rest.

I was for a short time in garrison near Zolkiew, a small old Polish town in the neighbourhood of Lemberg. Of an evening I usually rode from my station into town, in order to shorten the long evenings, for it was late in the autumn, over a cup of tschai, or by a game at tarok. On the evening in question the conversation turned on that strange book, “The Seer of Prevorst,” in which are found detailed notices of the whole inner life of the spiritual world. A very accomplished

and intelligent physician gave us his opinion, in opposition to that of many unbelievers in such matters who were of the party, that it was easy to laugh at such things, but very difficult to give an explanation of manifold daily appearances in nature, which are, however, in connexion with an invisible sphere, and of their connexion with us.

Every one of those present had now some goblin story or other to relate. An old captain told how the ghost of a French general who had been shot, gradually approached the out-posts, and, in spite of the "Who goes there?" and the firing of the sentry, rushed by on his visionary grey horse; and that private B——, who, moreover, was tipsy at the time, got five-and-twenty lashes on his back for not having stopped him. One had something to tell of a "white lady;" another of a "black gentleman:" so that at last nothing but such phantoms were dancing before my eyes; and I was right glad when I was again astride my bay, and was trotting out of the town-gates.

It was a cold November night. The moon gazed with a really corpse-like face from among the scudding clouds. Then occurred to me the story of Colonel K., an old friend of my father's, who, a short time before his sudden death, was accompanied one night for two miles by a black rider without a head, whom the orderly officer, an old uhlan, that was with him, persisted in asserting he had not seen; and who only vanished at a little votive cross erected by the way-side. I thought of the church at L——, whose windows were lighted up of themselves at midnight, and whence the tones of the organ and chants for the dead were heard. In short, I was quite confused. In vain I endeavoured to circumscribe

my imagination with thoughts of "white ladies," or even "brown ladies," only; do what I would, a "black man" always occupied my thoughts.

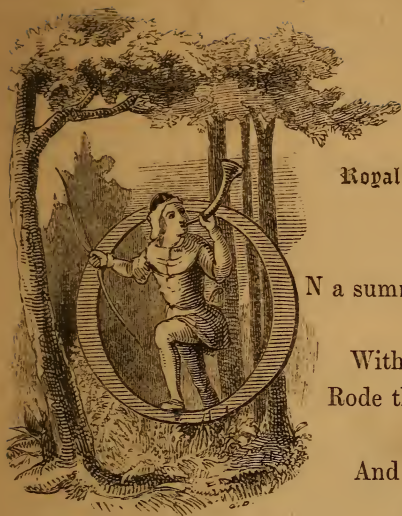
My horse, that was inveterately obstinate, and had the bad habit of forcing his way through every gate that he found open, gave me enough to do. Happily doors and gateways were every where closed; but he seized each opportunity of at least forcing himself up against them, and thus, if possible, of getting me off his back. In this manner, constantly battling together, we had got to the outside of the town, and I drove him on with whip and spur along a high wall, when at last we had to pass an open gate. With one bound the horrid brute was inside. Spur and lash were useless; he reared almost upright, and was not to be moved from the spot. I looked around me to see into what place I had got, and found, to my no small terror, that it was the churchyard in which I was. It was unlucky; and, I confess it openly, a shudder crept over me. Moreover, my horsemanship, for getting the mastery over the obstinate beast, it was difficult to employ here. In the first place, a Polish churchyard is like a wood; for the crosses erected over the graves are not, as with us in Germany, only a few feet high, but as high as a tree. Then I risked every moment to plunge into one of the many open graves—for it was the cholera time—which were ready prepared. In vain I dug my spurs in my horse's sides. Now he knocked against a crucifix with his fore feet; now I could feel that his hinder ones were sinking in the fresh upturned heap. I was just on the point of executing a manœuvre so disliked by the cavalry, of forming on foot namely, when something occurred that absolutely made my very blood

curdle. In the middle of the churchyard, as is often the case in Poland, was a little chapel for the dead, wherein the biers and other things necessary for interment were kept; sometimes also it was used to receive a still unburied corpse. But who shall paint my horror when the door of the chapel opened, and a ghostly figure, illumined by the moonshine, came forth. It was a Templar, with a long white garment which fell to the earth, with a red cross on his breast, and a full grey beard that reached to his girdle. I thought I should sink from the saddle! Slowly gliding, the apparition advanced towards me. I still had self-possession enough to observe if the footsteps of the figure on the newly-frozen snow gave signs, by causing a cracking sound, of bodily earthly consistency. But no! noiselessly it approached; the red cross grew more and more distinct; I could already distinguish the curls of the beard; from the haggard, sunken, aged countenance two hollow eyes stared on me! There stood the figure before my horse's head; I felt a certain cold trickling down my back, and my knees trembled or clung convulsively to the saddle. It now lifted its hand towards the reins, and asked in a low tone, and in Polish, "What do you look for, sir, and what do you wish?" "That you lead out my horse," stammered I, with the resignation of despair; and behold, the obliging ghost led my horse by the bridle through the gate of the churchyard! Once outside, I began to breathe more freely, and commenced making acquaintance with the apparition that had done me such good service; and the whole affair was now explained, which, had I been longer in Galicia, might very easily have been so sooner. The church-watchmen, as they are called, who have the care of church and churchyard, are

dressed much in this manner. They are generally old men, who, moreover, in these parts mostly wear long garments, their robes being of all colours, according to the community to which they belong. His happened to be white, which gave him the appearance of a Templar. He had that night the charge of the churchyard; and the tremendous row that I had made with my horse had brought him out of the chapel. He took very thankfully some silver coin which I with much joy put into his hand, and we parted quite contented. He locked the churchyard, for a long time as I hope, on me; I spurred my horse and galloped away: but it was not before I got home, and was sitting by the stove with a cup of tschai, that I felt comfortable and warm.

You laugh, dear reader! But if *you* were on the horse and before the Templar, it would then be my turn to laugh.





The Ballad

OF THE

Royal Hunt in the New Forest.



ON a summer's day, in the morning
time,
With archers many and good,
Rode the Red King forth to sur-
prise the stag,
And wake the merry green
wood.

And many a churl there was there that day
To beat up and drive the game,
Whose home had been built 'neath those broad oak-trees
Long ere he'd heard William's name.

But the Hunter King he had driven them forth,
As they now drove out the deer ;
And the swineherd's hollow dull-sounding horn
Dare no more re-echo there.

No longer was heard the blithe woodman's axe,
Nor stave of his Saxon song ;
Nor the dance on the frequent holyday,
Nor shout of the festive throng.

One now only met with a troop of deer
At rest in a forest glade ;
Or a buck at gaze, ere he dashed away
To the covert's deeper shade.

The rotting cot of some forest churl
Might be seen, as on one strayed ;
But the fawn now over the threshold skipp'd,
Where his children once had played.



On the rippling breath of the morning air
There floated many a curse :
But what matters that to a sov'reign lord ?
He breathes not a whit the worse.

God save me, I pray, from another's curse,
Words muttered with meanings dim ;
For a curse makes desolate heart and hearth,
Yea, withereth soul and limb.

“ Now hie ye along, all ye Saxon boors,
Ye lagging and mutt’ring crew ;
And beware if ye keep not close to-day,
Or let but one stag break through !”

And athrough the wood where the deer must pass
Each archer doth take his stand,
With his yewen bow, and a three-foot shaft,
Fitted ready to his hand.

Oh, it’s pleasant to be in the green wood shade
When all is solemnly still,
And there’s hardly a breeze to move the leaves
Atop of the wooded hill ;

And watch with expectant and longing ear
For the merest coming sound ;
And, breathless, at last hear a rustling step
Move stealthily o’er the ground.

And then to behold, with exulting eye,
The creature with antlered crest,
Emerge from a thicket, whose leafy boughs
Give way ’fore his broad brown chest ;

And watch how with caution he cometh forth,
And how in his pride of height
He walketh erect o’er the sun-lit sward,
Encircled in golden light ;

And behold him then stand before you there,
In that still forest glade alone,
Not a bow-shot's length from your own right hand,
And to feel he is all your own.

Ay, this is delight which none can know
But he who hath roamed the wood,
And watched the deer, and followed him close,
Through valley, and brake, and flood ;

And stopped to listen upon the hill
For sound of the tinkling bell,
And watched for the bay of the bloodhound sure,
As he follows through yonder dell ;

Then hears by the quickly repeated yell,
The creature is now at bay,
And mad with expectancy dashes on
Through bushes and tangled spray.

Oh, none but a hunter can know what's felt,
When looking long vainly round,
He findeth at last by the traces fresh,
Red drops on the mossy ground.

The flower thus stained, unto him doth bring
More joy than the reddest rose ;
It telleth a tale to his heart as dear
As the blush that doth all disclose.

The gay green wood ! 'Tis a lovely world,
With a beauty that's all its own ;
And pleasant it is in summer time
To roam through that world alone.

Now cometh the Second Part.

ON came the deer through the sounding wood,
At first like a rising wind ;
Then by they swept with a growing noise,
Till foes were all far behind.

Now on again comes another herd,
They follow their leader's track :
I' the van their chief, his embattled crown
Flung down on his velvet back.

“ Now mark him well as he cometh on !
Take heed when he rushes by !
And when he emerges from yonder oaks,
Be ready, and then let fly !”

He stops a moment : with haughty mien
He casts a quick look around ;
Have heed ! the monarch must die to-day.
Ha ! that was a mighty bound !

Follow him quick with your cloth-yard shaft,
Sir Walter, he nears the glade !
Now let the string right merrily ring ;
He must in the dust be laid !

St. Hubert ! still he leads on the van—
Yon monarch dies *not* to-day :
A shaft, though sent by a cunning hand,
Finds not the right heart alway.

“ Grammercy ! sure there is some strange power
To turn thus a shaft awry,
When breeze is none e'en to chase away
Yon cloudlet upon the sky !”

Now, if it be true that God sees when
A sparrow falls to the ground,
Why should He not guide the arrow's flight
Where the noblest quarry's found ?

But why starts he who has shot his bow,
Why looketh he pale with fright ?
Perchance he hath seen some wondrous thing,
Some supernatural sight.

See what he may, he hastens away,
And leaves his good bow behind ;
And when a breeze rustles through the leaves,
He's scared like a timid hind.

And on, still onward, and on he flies,
Nor stops till he hears the sea ;
Then at the roar of the sounding shore,
He draweth his breath more free.

“ Ho, fisher ! I must away to France,
And thou and thy boat must go ;
A purse right full of good silver marks
Is better than fish I trow !

Now, prithee, for love of God and Christ,
And by his dear Virgin Mother,
If ye delay until break of day,
I never may see another !

Now for the boat ! and get her afloat
As quick as ever ye can :
Nay, waste not breath, 'tis for life and death,
For I am a followed man !

And there is need of the utmost speed,
A price is upon my head,—
The string I drew of my bow of yew,
And a royal hart fell dead !”

“ And so, because of these cursed laws,
Thou’rt driven across the sea ?—
My boat is thine, and both I and mine
Will aid thee to quickly flee.

For sake of a royal hart laid low,
’Twere pity that thou should’st die !”—
I know no more than they left the shore,
And over to France did hie.

Now cometh the Third Part.

THE sky was clear and the night serene,
And brightly looked forth the Moon,
Right over-head in the topmost place,
As high as the sun at noon.

Lone as a boat on the open sea,
Full a thousand miles from land,
So moveth she through the concave depths
Of the blue serene and bland.

And over the ground a mystic light
Was spread, and over the trees ;
They seemed to lie in a charmed sleep,
And silent as frozen seas.

Now, strange is the power the Moon hath got ;
She worketh with potent spell ;
She changes nought, and yet changes all,
Hill-side, and river, and dell.

The Sun, he comes with his ardent looks ;
He gazes, and all things glow ;
His touch so fervid consumeth some—
Consumes e'en the virgin snow.

Like one who in manhood is strong moves he,
In fulness and pride of health,
And over the earth that he loves he spreads
His splendour and golden wealth.

But she, the Moon, she is calm and cold,
Her beams have no warming power;
And bale they work in the brains of men,
If struck at the midnight hour.

Whether she races among the clouds,
Or moves like a pageant queen,
Alike her spell o'er the atmosphere,
Trance-like is her steady sheen.

And all in the wood was hush'd and still,
Not a deer moved o'er the ground;
But from the depths of the under-growth
They listen'd and stared around.

They stare and listen with form erect,
As though they still heard the rout;
And watchful stand in the silver'd shade,
Too fearful to venture out.

And some lay there in the thicket dense,
Where even at noon 'twas cool;
Or in the sedge, or upon the grass,
Not far from the oft-sought pool.

But these nor listened nor peer'd about,
Each eye it was glaz'd and dim;
The head flung back, and outstretched and stiff
Each active and graceful limb.

And here was Death ; and around was Death ;
Was it this made all so still ?
For Life, flow calm as it may, when stopp'd,
Is felt like a silenced rill.

Ah, Life is strange, and Death too is strange !
Strange whether in man or brute ;
And awful too is in both the change
That brings on the state that's mute.

And awful it is to feel the heart
Has finish'd to heave and knock ;
Its movement stopp'd and now standing still,
As still as a run-down clock.

But where now was he, the Hunter King,
The lord over life and death,
Whom Saxon serf and his houseless child
Both curse, though with stifled breath ?

“ Now surely ye wot, lords of Normandie,
Where he so long doth tarry ? ”
“ Pardie ! he must in the forest stray,
After the wounded quarry. ”

Ay, sound your horns, lords of Normandie ;
The deer, they may start and waken,
But no reply from the wood will come,
'Tis mute now and all forsaken !

And men at first they in whispers spoke,
Then louder, but yet not loud ;
And strange surmises, half-uttered, ran
Among the scar'd courtier crowd.

With shy mistrust and with doubt each look'd
Suspicious upon the other ;
And keeping close his own thoughts, not one
Did trust to his very brother.

And all remember'd Duke Robert's son —
'Twas scarcely more weeks than five—
How he to that very forest went,
And never returned alive.

And in each eye was a restless fear,
That told more than words could say.
“A curse!”—the thinker he crossed himself—
“A curse! no, *that* cannot slay!”

Now save me, I pray, from another's curse,
Words mutter'd with meanings dim ;
For a curse makes desolate heart and hearth,
Yea, withereth soul and limb.

Now cometh the Last Part.

SWEET is the breath of a July morn,
And pleasant each sight and sound
Which through the wood at the prime of day
Spreads gladness and joy around.

The sky looks in through the vaulted roof
Of tracery, arch, and beam ;
The vast oak-stems its strong pillars are,
Adown which the sun doth gleam.

And he who walketh at this sweet time
Abroad in the forest-world,
When all is fresh, and each verdant bough
Is still from the dawn impearl'd ;

Him greeteth at every onward step
Some sight that is new and strange ;
A shadow here, or a sunbeam there,
Producing fantastic change.

But what moves him, yonder peasant churl,
With dull inanimate look ?
He surely feels not the morning's joys,
He hears not the humming brook.

For shadow nor sunbeam careth he ;
However, 'tis some strange sight
That holds him there with fixed staring look,
And, seemingly, great affright.

Is it, perchance, but the devil's will ;
Or one of those horrid shapes
Which, as 'tis said, since the Norman times,
Are seen in these forest brakes ?

He goes with his comrades towards the spot,
'Twas under a road-side tree ;
There lay a corpse—'twas the Hunter King—
Ay, dead, stricken dead was he.

“Aha!” quoth they, as they saw the shaft
That stuck in the Red King's breast ;
“The Fiend, he shoots with a right true aim,
His arrows they are infest.”¹

Now I do say 'twas no demon's work,
Nor wrought by accursed spell ;
That shaft was guided by God in heaven,
Not sent by a fiend of hell.

They drag him forth, and each takes a hand,
And two at his feet and head ;
Now care they not for the mighty lord,
His presence inspires no dread.

And so they bare it along, the corpse,
With grim Saxon jest and mirth,
To a rotting cot, and there laid it down,
Down on the desolate hearth.

No Norman lord was there near to lay
The limbs out in decent order ;
Three peasant churls were his chamberlains,
And a charcoal-burner warder.

¹ deadly.

No roof above ; 'twas all bare, all bare !

The walls were mere tott'ring wrecks :
'Twas his work all ;—it was thus he used
To trample on Saxon necks.

The children's songs and the baby's laugh,
That once made that cot so gay,
Were hush'd ; and now not a human voice
Was heard there the live-long day.

* * * * *

The spoiler then from the ground they lift,
But that which seemed dry before,
The corpse, large blood-drops it now lets fall,
Up to where had been once the door.

And step by step as they bore it on,
Still falleth it drop by drop :
From where it lay all along the way,
It oozes and will not stop.

And still as a crazy horse drags on
The cart with its staring load,
That red bloody sign it follows still,
Ay, all along the road.

That bloody track like a chain goes back,
Goes back to the rotting cot :
No iron bands forged by human hands
Such terrible power have got.

And so they journey athrough the wood,
In sunshine and now in shade ;

Now winding down through a hollow way,
And crossing a water'd glade.

The shaft still sticks in the dead man's breast,
And on it the shadows dance :
'Tis seen afar neath the thick boughs where
The light shineth in askance.

For still erect stands that gleaming thing
In spite of the ruts and stones ;
Nought shakes it down ; it is planted firm,
Wedged tight in between the bones.

Those Saxon churls who had found the corse,
That arrow dared not to touch :
" It had been sped by the Fiend," they said ;
" Oft-times had they heard of such.

He goes to the chase of the Norman race
As they go to hunt the deer ;
A shaft he lets fly, and then one must lie
Outstretched on a mossy bier."

And so they came on to Winchester,
And much folk did run to gaze ;
Each one was scared, and some stood and stared
In fear and in great amaze.

And on behind the corpse of the king
Still followed that track of gore ;
Althrough all the streets of Winchester
Up to his own palace-door.

Like written signs are those red-traced lines,
A fearful and bloody scroll ;—
God grant that blood may but wash away
The guilt that's upon his soul !

Then to the Abbey of Winchester
The priests with the body go ;
And prayers were said at the dead man's head,
And masses not few I trow.

So this is the tale of the famous hunt
When William the Red was slain ;
Though roughly told, yet I fain would hold
'Twill not be withouten gain.



Notes on the Royal Hunt in the New Forest.



THERE is, as I have lately learned, a (modern) ballad on the same subject, the death of William Rufus, and possessing considerable merit; but I have not yet had the good fortune to meet with it.

The sound of the tinkling bell.—Part i. verse 17.

For those not versed in “the noble science of venerie,” the following explanation will render the allusion intelligible. When a stag has been wounded, and one has reason to think, from the appearance of the slot, or from other signs, that he cannot go far, the bloodhound is put upon his traces; he is not, however, held in a leash, as is the case on other occasions, but is allowed to run at full liberty. Round his neck, however, a small bell is attached; so that, as he ranges through the forest or dense thicket in pursuit of the wounded game, keeping always unerringly on its traces, you can hear whereabouts he is, and on which side of the wood the stag is likely to emerge, and so be prepared to meet him.

The bloodhound gives tongue only when the game is in view. But when the stag is at bay, the sound is quite different from that while in pursuit; it is then a quickly-repeated bark, almost a yell—angry, impetuous, sharp, and high. You may hear it from afar; you see nothing, it is true, but you know exactly what is going on there as though you were on the spot. You know that the mighty stag is standing in the wood, unable to go further, with his antlers bent to the ground, and defending himself against the bloodhound, as, maddened with excitement and fury, he flies at his throat, or strives to fix himself on his haunches, and so tear him to the earth. And as you dash towards the spot to secure the prey, the whole scene is as distinctly visible as though it were really before your eyes.

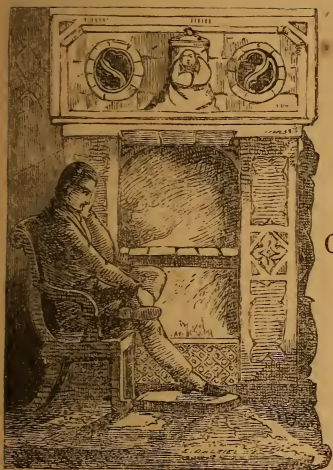
When looking long vainly round.—Part i. verse 19.

When the stag does not fall immediately after the shot, the first thing is, to see if he has been wounded or not. It sometimes happens, that for many paces from the spot where he passed at the moment of being struck, no traces of his being wounded are to be found. It is an anxious moment, then, while looking with strained eye upon every blade of grass, or on the bushes, or against the stems of the trees, for some sign or other to tell that we have not missed; and when, after looking long around in vain, some “red drops” are found at last, the exultation of the moment is not easy to be described.

One of those horrid shapes.—Part iv. verse 7.

The devastation caused in forming the New Forest was frightful. Thirty-six parishes were destroyed. The chase had hitherto been the sole means of subsistence to many a one who now, by the sanguinary forest-laws, was at once deprived of it. The Saxon peasant was despoiled of his land, and turned adrift. Such acts seemed to cry aloud for retribution; and men deemed that the powers of darkness were leagued to punish them. It was said that the devil appeared to the Normans in the most horrible shapes, as they passed the forest; and that a frightful end awaited them, the king, and his councillors. And the events that really did happen there confirmed the superstitious in their belief. In 1081 one of the Conqueror’s sons, while riding in the forest, was crushed against a tree. That it was looked upon as a visitation of Heaven is natural. In May 1100, his nephew there lost his life; and in the July following, William Rufus was killed.





THE MALCONTENTS

OW comfortable it was before
the cheerful blazing fire!
How it crackled and flickered,
and how the flames seemed to
play with one another! It was
good fun to see them getting
on each other's backs, knock-

ing each other down, and then scrambling away up the chimney as fast as ever they could, before the others had time to be after them.

Sometimes the spirit of some poor little bit of flame was so completely damped by being thus licked up, as it were, by a noisy blustering blaze, that it did not attempt to shew itself again, and so, as it was able to do nothing else, it made a great deal of smoke.

And a pair of hazel eyes were watching the fire and all that was there going on; and the head to which the eyes belonged was thinking the while how delightful a thing an English fireside is; how unlike anything, how far better than all, one finds elsewhere. The carpeted floor, the thick ample

curtains that hung down so dozingly beside the window—for there was only one window to the room, and that led at once to a pretty little lawn where the daisies *would* keep shewing themselves, although warrants for their instant decapitation had been issued daily, which the executioner, that is to say the old gardener, never failed of obeying; and all along one side, row upon row of books, and above fancifully carved beams, which were meant to look gothic, painted of a brownish red; and then too the polished mahogany sideboard that was facing the window, and which gleamed in the flickering light like a broad brown face indolently laughing in its corner—all united to make the room look as snug and as cozy as any body with an English heart could possibly wish.

And so thought the person who was sitting there in the twilight; for the evening was closing in, and the candles, those intrusive visitors that so often walk in just when one would rather be without them, had not yet made their appearance. On the soft rug rested a foot.

“What!” you ask, “had the person who was sitting there but one leg?”

Oh no; but the other was safely deposited, in most approved English fashion, on the right knee; and all the five fingers of the right hand were helping to nurse it.

Well, the foot on the rug as well as the foot that was being nursed on the knee had both shoes on—good thick solid shoes, fit for walking in the lanes out in the country, even though they should be wet,—and this is just what the shoes had been doing. And in front were ten eyelet holes, five on each side, through which the shoe-string passed, and it went zig-zag all the way up, making cross-bars like a prison-win-

dow ; and a-top of the instep it was fastened so cleverly as not to be easily undone, unless you knew the secret. The secret was, to pull one end of the string, and then the knot was open in a moment. Of course, now you know it, you find it very easy ; but if no one had ever told you, what then ?

And as the person who owned the two shoes, as well as the feet that were in them, sat looking at the fire, and seeing all sorts of strange things among the coals—hump-backed people, and houses, and great staring faces—he fell into a sort of reverie. Perhaps he was thinking of the daisies on the lawn that had given him so much trouble, and of how he should get rid of them ; for though he was constantly ordering their poor little heads to be cut off, there they were the next morning as bright-eyed as ever. And this vexed him, for he wanted to have his lawn all green—without a single daisy. Be it as it may, the fingers of his right hand were still round the left ankle, when the toes suddenly seemed to give a jerk ; but this, no doubt, was only the effect of the warm blaze which, from their present position, was now on a line with them.

“ We have risen to our proper station in the world at last,” said a low murmuring voice that seemed to proceed from the innermost depth of the left shoe, and which, low as it was, the person before the fire, no doubt, heard ; for his head was every moment nodding down lower and lower towards his lap, on purpose, I suppose, to catch every word of the conversation that had just begun.

“ We have risen to our proper station at last, and are now on a level with those who have so long looked down upon us as our betters. There is, after all, nothing so hateful as upstart vanity.” And at the same moment the extreme end of

the left shoe gave another jerk, for it was the five toes therein contained that had just been speaking.

“We can maintain our position without your help,” said they snappishly to the five fingers that were resting on the instep. “We wonder such grand personages as you are can condescend to associate with us!” and again another jerk.

“Why, what’s the matter?” asked the fingers. “Have you been pinched?”

“Oh, there’s nothing at all the matter,” said the toes; “though as to being pinched, you know very well that we have been often enough. You have always looked down upon us till now; but we have risen to our proper station in the world at last: ours is an elevated position, and we can maintain it.”

“But what makes you so cross?” asked the little finger, which, though rather somewhat of a dandy, was yet acknowledged by every one to be the gentlest and most innocent of the family.

“Cross!” said the great toe in reply; “I think the treatment we have received is enough to spoil the sweetest temper. While you and your four brothers have been made as much of as if you were princes, we have hardly seen the light. And are we not every whit as good as you?”

“Oh, certainly, every whit as good!” said the fingers. “But you should not be in such a fury because we happen to be placed higher in the world.”

“Oh, we are on a level now; we have got into our proper station at last; ours is an elevated position,” cried all the toes at once.

“I dare say you think we have nothing to do,” said the

thumb, who was generally looked upon as the most influential member of the family. "But our life is not passed in idleness, and we are not always so wonderfully well off, I can assure you."

"Idleness, indeed!" rejoined the others; "when two or three of you choose to take a walk about some smooth white paper, and amuse yourselves by making a quantity of black scratches, you fancy you have done a wondrous deal, and exclaim, 'We can write!' or 'We have written a book!'. And you play with sweet flowers, and you can take wives, so it seems at least by the rings some of you wear, and other long taper and much fairer fingers come to visit you, and ——"

"Don't talk scandal!" quickly interrupted the second finger, who, being the tallest of the family, took upon himself the part of champion. "I hope you meant nothing personal."

"We have always been ill-used," continued the others, not heeding the interruption; "we have been laced up in a sort of strait waistcoat, as though we had been mad; we have been thrust down into a deep dungeon called a boot, deprived of light and air; and we, moreover, have all grown hump-backed from the shocking treatment we have received."

"There is some truth in what you say," answered the fore-finger, who, on particular occasions, was very fond of thrusting himself forward: "you have, indeed, been very often in narrow circumstances, and we have frequently felt for you; but then our abilities are so different, that I really do not see how you can think of doing as we do, and of taking the same position in society."

"Abilities! position in society!" exclaimed all the toes at once in a great rage. "Pray are you aware that one of the

toe family is knelt to and kissed by thousands every year? And as to abilities, did you never see what some of our name once did that belonged to a lady who had no fingers—she preferred not having any—and how cleverly they cut out, and wrote, and did all that you boast of doing? They were so skilful that people used to pay to see them; and pray when did any one ever pay money for seeing fingers? Abilities, forsooth!” and the shoe gave a tremendous jerk.

“It is well known you have at all times been particularly instrumental in the advancement of the human race,” said the third finger very calmly—for he was of a most unassuming disposition, and, like his smaller brother, seldom meddled much in what the others did—“and what greater praise can you require? That you have been often cruelly bound and cast into profound dungeons we well know, and we have pitied you; and not seldom have we, as soon as we were able, unloosed your bonds; and if too weak ourselves, when no one was by, we have bribed the hard-hearted gaoler, Boot-jack, who has always his nose in the air, to drag you from your gloomy prison. And wherever we have gone, you have always accompanied us; we have never left you behind.”

“That’s a good joke!” said the toes. “But for us you must always have stayed at home. And what have we got for our good nature? If you are invited out to dinner, you have every time a bran-new coat on for the occasion, supple and soft, and as golden as the buttercups we have once or twice got a peep of through a chink in our prison-wall; while we are ever thrust into the same obscurity. Well, we take you out of the carriage, and up stairs we go. Arrived at the drawing-room, we expect some little notice will be taken of us. But

no: 'tis you who are noticed. Another five fingers, also in a bran-new coat of a pale yellow colour, comes and asks you how you do, and you pinch each other, and it's thought all very pretty. Then dinner is announced, the very thing for which we both have come. And how are we treated? While you all lie down upon the nice white table-cloth, and stretch yourselves out to shew your fine figures or some bit of finery that you happen to have on ——"

"You're growing personal," said the little finger, somewhat embarrassed, for, in reality, he was very apt in company to shew-off a little, and to stand at some distance from his brothers, as though he did not belong to the family.

"Oh, if the cap fits, pray wear it," said the toes, continuing their complaint; "and while you are twisting and twirling about, and playing all manner of tricks with the candles shining upon you, we are put under the table, and are expected to be still. And if we try to scrape acquaintance with another five toes in the same miserable situation as ourselves, instead of meeting with kindness or sympathy, they draw back directly, and the person to whom they belong looks up, and seems to think it very disagreeable. But this is over now. We have risen to our proper position in the world at last. We are now on a level with each other!"

"We really cannot help it," said the fingers, getting somewhat angry, and, loosening their hold of the instep, seemed very much inclined to leave their neighbours to their own reflections. "The place we fill at table we have filled since our birth, and we cannot creep under the table to please you, and because you are discontented. Besides, the mouth would not allow it."

“Oh, the mouth has always a great deal to say for himself, and, moreover, requires constant attendance. But as to birth,” said the great toe, “our race is quite as ancient as yours; and though you seem to think our place is on the floor, we formerly, let me tell you, were treated with respect, and we saw what was going on at table as well as any of you. But all things degenerate; yet of us who can say that we ever go backwards? we are always in advance; we are the only true progressionists. Yes, in olden times, at the great feasts that we went to, cushions were laid on purpose for us to repose on. In those days we enjoyed much more liberty, and saw more of the world. We then were free. We cannot now go free on account of civilisation. For our part, we don’t see what has been gained by civilisation, except the art of making our prison-walls shine as though they were of black crystal; and, after all, we are not a bit the happier. But this is civilisation—yes, this is what they mean by the much-bepraised civilisation!”

The fingers at length grew tired of listening; and when the toes began to talk of classic banquets, and of the days of Greece and Rome, and of civilisation, they fancied they must be dreaming—and dreaming they were. The leg, from its cramped and unusually high position, had, in fact, gone to sleep, and the toes of course had gone to sleep too, and they were now talking in their sleep.

Now, the whole secret of their ill-humour was this. The shoes had got a little damp from the walk they had had; and so when the left foot was raised to a position so much higher than that to which it was accustomed, and brought on a level with the glow of a blazing fire, the leather began to contract a

little ; and as the heat increased, the tighter the discontented five were pinched together. But this discomfort was solely consequent on their elevation in the world, which they were so mighty proud of, and had made such a fuss about.

The fingers had heard enough, and they determined to drop the acquaintance, which they did by leaving their hold on the instep and falling listlessly against the side of the chair ; when at the same moment down slid the left foot from its resting place on the right knee, and fell with a thump on the floor. The noise caused the head, which before had been nodding backwards and forwards, to stop with a sudden start. The two hazel eyes half opened and peered into the fire, which was now all in a glow, without a bit of flame ; and while they did so, the door of the snug room opened, and two candles, the light of which made the eyes feel as if they were dislocated, were brought in.

“Why, I declare, I think I have had a nap,” said the person who had been sitting before the fire ; “and my left leg,—ah ! confound it ; why it has gone to sleep too.” And up he got to stretch himself and to see what o’clock it was ; but directly he did so, ten thousand pins and needles seemed running into his left foot, and up his leg, and right through and through all the very toes that were so proud of their new position in the world. It was a sort of cramp ; and for a long time they were quite dead, and were very glad to stamp upon the ground to help them to get rid of the ten thousand pins and needles.

And so that was all they got by their “elevated position.”

Loose Pearls of great Price.



Who shuts his hand, hath lost his gold;
Who opens it, hath it twice told.

Who goes to bed, and doth not pray,
Maketh two nights to every day.

Dare to be true. Nothing can need a lie;
A fault which needs it most, grows two
thereby.

Gold thou may'st safely touch; but if it stick
Unto thy hands, it woundeth to the quick.

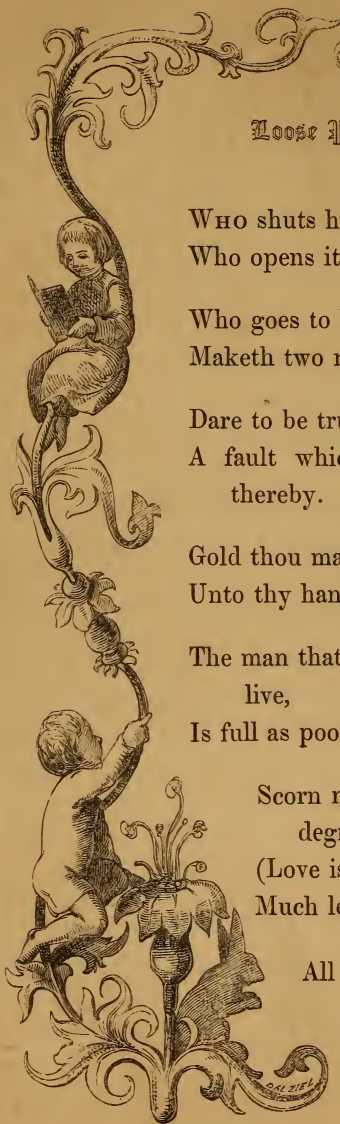
The man that needs five thousand pounds to
live,
Is full as poor as he that needs but five.

Scorn no man's love, though of a mean
degree

(Love is a present for a mighty king);
Much less make any one thine enemy.

All things on earth do fade and
wane,
Honour alone doth firm remain.

GEORGE HERBERT.





Prayer for Rain.

WRITTEN DURING THE LONG DROUGHT OF 1842.



ALMIGHTY GOD! send rain upon Thy earth!
The land is dying, and each heart is drear:
With Thee of mercy there is never dearth;
Then hear our prayer, O Lord, in pity hear!

We thirst, O God, we thirst! all, all is dry!
The very rivers running to the sea
Shrink day by day beneath Thy parching sky,
And Thy blest fruits hang sapless on the tree.

Holdest Thou not the ocean in Thy hand?
Have we, then, Lord, so grievously transgress'd,
That Thou dost make our globe as barren sand,
The land Thy mercy hath so often bless'd?

Oh, let the rivulets be heard again,
Rejoicing as they leap athrough the vale ;
Oh, let our harvests droop not on the plain,
Lest Famine should our cottages assail !

But if, in Thy omniscience, Thou dost still
To our entreaties a deaf ear incline,
Then help us, Lord, to bear what is Thy will,
Then strengthen us, that we may not repine.





THE CLOUD

ONE summer's morning a small cloud rose from the sea, and sailed, buoyant and joyful, like a blooming playful child, through the blue sky and over the whole land, that lay below parched and sorrowing after a long drought.

As the cloudlet floated onward, it saw how man, full of care, and in the sweat of his countenance, was working and toiling on the earth; the while it, free from all care and trouble, was borne on its way by the light breath of a purer air.

“Ah!” said the cloud, “were I but able to do aught for those poor men below; to lighten their labour, to fright away

their cares, to provide food for the hungry, and give refreshment to those who thirst!"

And the day advanced, and the cloud grew always larger; and as it grew, the desire to devote its existence to man acquired still greater force.

But on the earth it was hotter and hotter; the glowing sun burned fiercely, and sorely oppressed all those who were at labour. They well nigh fainted with the heat; but they were obliged to toil on, for they were very poor.

And they cast an imploring look towards the cloud, as though they would say, "Oh, if thou wouldst but help us!"

"Yes, I will help ye!" said the cloud; and immediately began to incline gently towards the earth.

But then the cloud remembered what it had once heard as a child when in the bosom of the ocean; that the clouds, if they descend too low earthward, inevitably meet their death.

For a long time it hesitated, and was driven to and fro by its thoughts. At last it stood still, and spoke bold and joyful; "Ye children of men, I will help you, let happen what may!"

This thought suddenly made the cloud of a gigantic size, and strong and mighty. It never before had even a presentiment that it was capable of such greatness. Like a God of blessing it stood over the land, and lifted its head and spread its wings far over the fields. Its magnificence was so great that men and animals were afraid; that the trees and the grass bowed before it; but all felt an inner consciousness that it was their benefactor.

"Yes, I will help ye!" cried the cloud again; "receive me—I die for you!"

It was a mighty will which then agitated the cloud. A

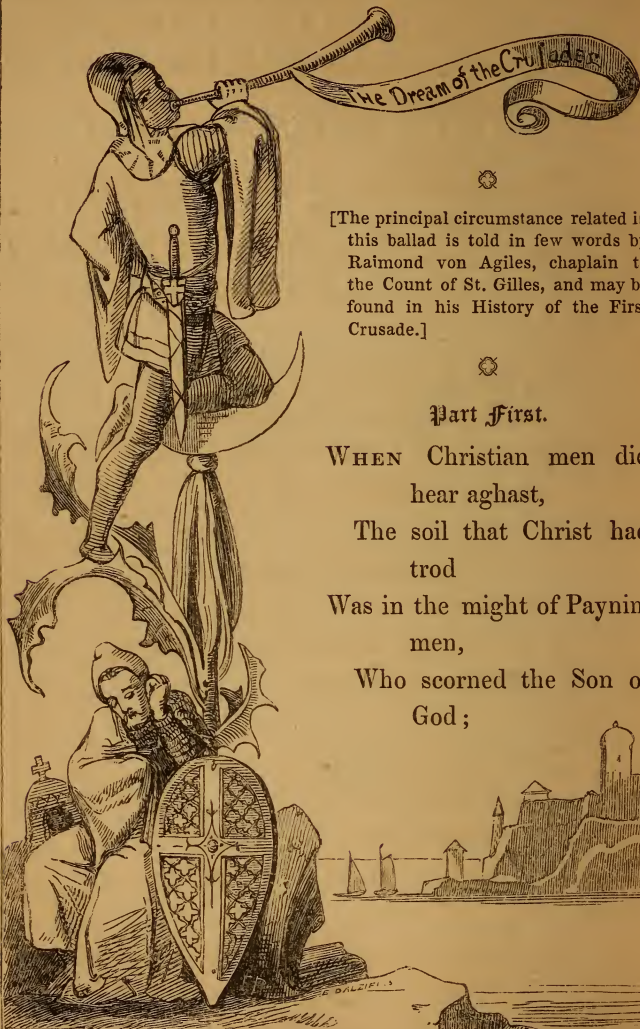
more exalted brightness inflamed it, thunder rolled through every part ; it was pervaded by a vast, by an endless love. It sank down on the earth and dissolved in blessing—dropping rain.

This rain was its deed, this rain was its death, and in it it was to be glorified.

Over the whole land, as far as the rain had poured itself, there rose a gleaming rainbow, formed of the purest rays of heaven : it was the last visible salutation of a vast self-sacrificing love.

Yet that soon vanished also ; but the blessings which the cloud had given remained, and were long afterward possessed by man, whom it had rejoiced and saved.





[The principal circumstance related in this ballad is told in few words by Raimond von Agiles, chaplain to the Count of St. Gilles, and may be found in his History of the First Crusade.]

Part First.

WHEN Christian men did
hear aghast,
The soil that Christ had
trod
Was in the might of Paynim
men,
Who scorned the Son of
God;

Arose there then through Christendom
One universal cry,
To wrest that land from such a grasp—
To win it or to die.

That cry went forth through Europe's realms,
From one end to the other ;
The call was like the thunder's voice,
That nought on earth can smother.

It woke up those whose life had been
A long and quiet slumber ;
It roused and brought together men,
A vast and mighty number.

And they, whose only mates had been
Repose and slothful ease,
Sought sterner comrades, and embarked
To sail across the seas.

The holy priest was there to pray,
And if need be to fight ;
And should a coward heart be there,
With curse that heart to blight.

And kings and princes when they heard
Did doff the kingly coat,
And in its place a shirt of mail
That went up to the throat.

And men left all that man holds dear,
Sold land and dwelling-place,
To win a better home in arms
Against that Paynim race.

And France's fairest chivalry
Did mount at that loud call ;
From Normandy unto Provence,
None tarried in his hall.

Some came from the fast-flowing Loire,
And others from the Rhone,
And some whose castles were upon
The banks of the Garonne.

The troubadour flung down his lute
To gird him on his sword,
And gave to his fair ladye-love
A hasty parting word.

He loves her well, but there is one
He loveth better far :
'Tis Christ who calls, for Christ's dear sake
He joins the holy war.

On prancing steeds the knights ride forth
With pennon and with spear,
And lesser men they are afoot,
With varied fighting gear.

One common badge they all do wear,
A proud and holy crest,
A blood-red cross, emblazoned bright
On each left arm and breast.

Their banner is that blood-red cross,
Upraised as for a sign,
And animating all the host
With thoughts of Palestine.

And day by day they fought their way
Still onwards from the sea,
And charged upon the Infidel
With dauntless constancy.

The Paynim men advance again,
To drive them in the sea ;
But on them rush those red-cross men
With all their chivalry.

Part Second.

And 'mid that host of noble knights
Who from their homes had gone,
There was not one more worthy than
Anselm of Ribeaupont.

One early morn, the sun as yet
Was scarcely in the sky,
He begged the priest to shrive him then,
And so be fit to die.

He wished to take the sacrament
As soon as he was shriven,
That he might dare to meet his God
With hopes to be forgiven.

Now all did marvel at his words,
For he was fresh and well ;
And why he deemed that he should die,
No mortal man could tell.

But good Sir Anselm with grave mien
Thus spake—“ My race is run !
Ere yonder sun shall set again,
Life’s journey will be done.

My friend, Ingolram of St. Pol,
Who fell at Ma’ra’s fight,
And whom we all lamented so,
I’ve seen in the past night.

This very night he came to me,
And stood beside my bed ;
'Twas not a dream—I was awake,
And heard each word he said.

I asked him, ‘ Whither comest thou,
And why so bright and fair ?
For thou wert killed at Maara,
And we interred thee there.’

He was so bright and beautiful,
And mild each placid feature ;
He was not like a mortal man,
But some angelic creature.

He answered me, ‘ I am so fair,
And beautiful and bright,
Because my dwelling shineth so
With all-resplendent light.

And this to me my God hath given,
Because I served Him well ;
For laying down my life for Him
Against the Infidel.

And it hath been revealed to me,
That such a dwelling-place,
But brighter still, awaiteth thee,
Through God’s great sovereign grace.

And I am come to bring to thee
These tidings glad and sweet ;
Thy dwelling it is wondrous fair—
To-morrow there we meet !’ ”

* * * *

Again they went to fight their way
Still onwards from the sea ;
They charged upon the Infidel
With wonted constancy.

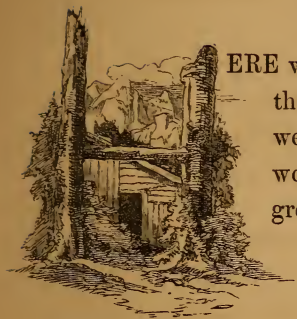
The Paynim men advance again,
To drive them in the sea,
But on them rushed the red-cross men
With all their chivalry.

And when the day's hard strife was o'er,
The sun went down apace,
The good Sir Anselm he was missed
At his accustomed place.

They sought him on the battle-field,
They found him 'midst the dead :
A stone, by some huge engine hurled,
Had struck him on the head.



THE MOST DIFFICULT PATH.



ERE we are at last, sir!" said my guide, the chamois-hunter, Jacob E——, as we emerged from the gloom of the wood, and beheld at the end of the green meadow, bordered with an enamel of flowers, the little cottage of the hunter lying before us.

"Thank God!" groaned I, exhausted by a long excursion that had lasted several hours over rock and crag, through woods and bushes, in endeavouring to stalk a chamois; and doffing my green hat, I stuck my mountain staff in the ground, laid rifle and pouch and hunting-knife beside it, and stretched myself at full length in the fragrant grass, while Jacob went on before to announce our arrival in the house.

As he stepped along so fresh and nimbly, carrying the chamois, the result of that day's sport, upon his shoulders, as easily as one of us would a partridge, I was vexed at my own exhaustion; while he, the robust young hunter, was scarcely fatigued by the unusually long march. "That's an iron churl truly, with springs of steel in his limbs instead of muscles," muttered I: "but this strong, indestructible physical nature is perhaps purchased with mental obtuseness and apathy. What does such a fellow feel, what does such a fellow think, in all his uniform existence, year after year the same?"

While our nerves are constantly in play, on account of the multifarious impressions and excitements of our life. But just therein lies the real fulness of our being. After all, the butterfly enjoys existence more intensely than the snail; the bird in the air feels a joy different to the marmot. But who can tell if such a man knows the magic power of love, or the intoxication of ambition; if he has an idea of the many-coloured puppet-tragedy which the passions in our breast daily represent?"

So whispered Cousin Vanity: but when I followed Jacob with my eyes, and saw how the joints of his bare knees stretched and extended at every step; when I looked at his broad vaulted chest, and observed the symmetry of his powerful healthy limbs, his good-natured friendly countenance, the true-hearted look of his blue eyes, and the luxuriance of his curly hair; when I thought of the many proofs of stout resolve which had been put to the test by poachers and the varied dangers of hunting in the mountains; when I remembered that his sinewy arm had supported me on the very brink of the precipice when I was already sliding downwards,—I was then obliged to acknowledge that he was a man, a proper man, in every sense of the word; and that I, and many others beside, might feel flattered to be allowed to take, in more matters than one, a place beside him.

Soon after came Maria, the spruce hunter's wife, who, four years ago, had been led home, or rather led up home, by the worthy Jacob from out the neighbouring hamlet to share with him his mountain solitude. She announced that the dinner was ready; and we immediately entered the cottage.

In the little room of the hunter's dwelling was the house-

hold furniture of the family :—a few wooden chairs and stools, a large oaken table, a clock in a case, a spinning-wheel, a gaudily painted box with the clothes of the wife, and a closet with plates and glasses, were to be seen there ; there, too, was an empty cradle, there a warm winter jerkin, a green hat with *gemsbart*¹ and tuft of feathers, a small tin vessel for holding holy water, the portrait of St. Eustace, and, hung up in a frame, his indentures, to shew that he had served his time as a hunter ; beside this were a pair of stag's antlers, and those of a roebuck ; while over the door a small chamois of carved wood, but with real horns, peeped very knowingly into the room.

I again went out and stood before the door of the cottage. The stillness that reigned within struck me ; for I well remem-

¹ *Gemsbart*, which means, if literally translated, “ beard of the chamois,” is a trophy of the chase worn by the hunter in his green hat as an ornament. It is made of the long hair which grows along the back of the chamois, the tips of which are of a lighter colour, and the lower part of a dark brown. When you have a handful, those of equal length are carefully sorted and arranged in a fan-like shape, the light-coloured tips forming a regular border all round. The longer the hair, the handsomer is the *gemsbart* considered. It is very troublesome to make them ; they consequently are rather expensive. At the bazaar to be held in May next* for the benefit of the German Hospital in London, two such may be seen, which I obtained from German friends in Munich, among the various things I had the pleasure of collecting for this excellent Institution. A similar ornament may also be made of the thick hair found on the neck of the stag in the rutting season, and is called *hirschbart*. A *gemsbart* as worn by the chamois-hunter may be seen in the vignette at the end of this story.—C.B.

* It was to have been held last May ; but was deferred on account of the Irish Bazaar.

bered to have been disturbed a few years ago in my noontide nap by the shouting of children, or by the reprimands of their mother. In front of the house sat Jacob smoking his pipe. Maria was busied in the kitchen. I cast my eye across towards the glaciers and walls of rock which, like an enchanted crystal mountain, gleamed in the sun; and I thought the while how often must one wander along these dangerous ways and dizzy narrow footpaths when, allured by the love of the chase or of rambling, one ventures into this granite temple where Nature performs her mysteries. There dwells the nimble chamois, there blooms and gives fragrance the healing spicy herb: but there alone do they shew themselves, and are not to be found on the well-trodden plain. Therefore is it that he who seeks the rare booty adventures his neck in the pursuit; and with all in the world it is so. He who seeks what is precious must risk what is best to get it. Sparrows may be shot from the house-top, flints and granite lie on the road-side; but it is only in the upper air that the heron soars, and gold shines only within the deep shaft.

I conversed with Jacob about the different difficult places and paths that lead through and over the mountains. He had been on the highest summits, had followed poachers and the chamois along dizzy ways, had let himself down by ropes into the abyss that he might track the rapacious golden eagle into his very nest. And he spoke of all this as if it were about a walk on the ramparts that he was talking; while a cold shuddering would creep over one of us, and we grew dizzy from merely listening. At last I asked him if the narrow path over the "Höllriegel" was more dangerous than that at "Schönbrett," or than that at the so-called "holy spot,"

where one is obliged to shove oneself along while sitting astride on a crag which, like the gable of a house, crowns two perpendicular walls of rock twice as high as the highest church-steeple. He said that in summer this was easy and not at all dangerous, but in winter perilous enough, because the rocks are slippery from the ice. "But which path, Jacob, appeared to you the most difficult, since you have climbed about these mountains?" Jacob considered for a long time; his countenance then suddenly grew serious, and he looked at me with a sorrowful expression. "The hardest way, kind sir, is that I went last year—'twill be a twelvemonth come next Holyrood-day;—I went down to the vicarage in W——, and when I came up again, I thought I should never reach home; my knees failed me, and my eyes were so dim that I was hardly able to find my way."

I looked at him in astonishment. "But, Jacob, why was the way so difficult? I can well conceive that in winter, when the snow drifts across the footpath, it may sometimes be difficult and dangerous to go up or down; but on the day of the Holyrood, why, then it is fair and serene in the mountains. How could the way then appear so difficult? unless, perhaps, you had taken a glass of Bavarian beer too much." "No, good sir, it was not that: I was forced to go down to bury my dead child. You know, of course, little Rosa, with whom you played so kindly two years ago? Well, she grew sick—she got the measles, and on the second day she died. I could not bring a doctor up here; but the young clergyman, the curate at the vicarage, he climbed up the mountain with me, because he had studied a good deal, and knows sometimes what will help the sick. But there was no help. Little Rosa was forced to

die because our Lord God would make an angel of her ; and some day in our dying hour she will pray for us, for she has nothing to atone for in the other world, like us sinful men ; that was what the young clergyman said, and it comforted Maria and me.

“ When the child was dead, and the clergyman was gone, Maria wept bitterly, and begged me to carry the child down below, that it might rest in consecrated ground. The next morning we laid it in a little coffin, which my wife slung at my back, and so I carried it down to the vicarage. The reverend gentleman read the service and blessed it himself ; and there it lies in the churchyard that you see down yonder. A pretty crucifix and a rose-bush stand upon the mound ; but it is too far to see it from here. Now look you, kind sir,” continued Jacob, wiping a tear from his eye, “ when I came up again in the evening to Maria to the lonely house, my knees tottered, and I thought they would never carry me further. That, sir, yes, that was my most difficult way !”

I was, I acknowledge, much moved. I know many men with, both mentally and physically, very unmanly qualities, who never weep ; and it therefore affects me so much the more when a true man does do so. A genuine manly tear is a rare invaluable pearl, that drops from the crucible of profound feeling. I wished to make some reply, and, as it generally happens on such occasions, I said something very little fitting, stupidly remarking, “ But, good Jacob, it was surely much less difficult to come up than to descend when you had to carry your melancholy burden !” Hereupon Jacob looked at me with a sad, I might almost say with a rebuking glance, as though he would reprimand me for my want of delicacy of

feeling; a look that seemed to say, "Oh, you dweller in cities, you comprehend me not! With you, no doubt, it is legs and lungs and stomach only that is referred to when you talk of suffering; as to what is going on within the heart, of that you trouble yourselves but little!" and said; "Ah, the going down was easy enough, for then I felt my little child on my shoulders—on my shoulders I rocked it still—how, then, could I find the dear burden heavy, I, who have borne the largest chamois at my back for miles? But up again, when the child was already resting in the earth—up again, that was hard work! It seemed to me as though the little birds that chirped around me so merrily, asked about their little comrade; as though the alpine rose and the moss flowers bloomed in mockery of me! And when I at last from afar saw my cottage-door standing open, whence formerly the little fresh maiden always sprang to meet me at my return, then, good sir, my knees trembled, and I thought my heart must surely break! I can assure you, worthy sir, THAT WAS my most difficult way!"

Maria had heard the concluding part of our conversation, for she wiped her eyes with her apron, and brought out the steaming soup in silence. But I now knew that the strong mountaineer bore a feeling heart in his broad powerful manly bosom.

I now sat down to table. The friendly endearing child was greatly missed too by me. When about to leave after our meal, I pressed Maria to accept a small present. When she shewed the bright coin to her husband, he said, "If our little Rosa were still alive, we could buy her some pretty clothes, and good stockings, instead of being obliged to let her run

about barefoot. But now God will provide for her." And again Maria's apron was before her face. It cannot have been there always, however ; for when I returned the following year, from the once empty cradle the voice of a little screamer met my ear, to whom I stood godfather. " God has taken from us one angel, and sent us another," whispered Maria from her bed. And I descended the mountain with Jacob to go to the christening ; and when we came up again, the way seemed quite easy to us and commodious.



THE
WALK THROUGH THE CORNFIELD.



WAS April time, and evening :
some days more
The month had still to count ;
and though sweet May—
Like a young dancer waiting
for his turn
To step into the round, so near
—seem'd all

Impatient to bound o'er the slopes and fields,
And lovingly with warm breath coax the flowers
To wake and shew themselves, fresh was the time,
And changeful :—April weather. Full of smiles
At first, and gay and bright as though he were
Betroth'd to sunny May, he full soon chang'd :
He hid his laughing face, and wrapt himself
Up in a snowy mantle. Thus more like
Stern old December's son than ardent fant,
Who on his face might feel a maiden's breath
So near approaching him, and all his limbs
Be penetrated by the radiant warmth
Of her young swelling form. And still he frown'd,

And would not be more gentle. Shrill and loud
In sullen mood he whistled for himself;
And not the full buds nor the teeming earth
Could move him kindly.

And I stood beside
A field of some few acres, where the corn,
Mere grass as yet, put forth its bright young green.
'Twas full of promise; yet methought, how much
May happen to mar all our present hopes
Of future plenty, ere the harvest come!
And will the sheaves be full and blessing-laden;
Or shall again man sorrow, and the land
Cry unto God in anguish!

As these words
Were spoken inwardly, a lark sprang up,
And hov'ring o'er the cornfield, fill'd the air
With sounds of joy. It was as he foresaw
The blessings which that spot of earth should bear,
And so pour'd forth a hymn of thankfulness
To God in heaven. Still he kept aloof,
Not bounding upwards to the highest cloud,
But at mid-distance; and there sang and sang
In loudest ecstasy, as o'er that field
He seem'd to hover like the Holy Dove.

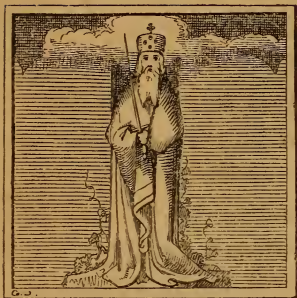
The sun now sank behind the hills, and down
The creature dropp'd. His song was eloquent
As words imparted by a spirit's voice.

I homeward went rejoicing ; for the hope
Was quick within my heart, that all the land
Would bring forth fruitfully, and the nodding ears
Fall thick and heavy in the reapers' arms.
Nor could I feel such joyous song but as
An admonition that in gloomy thought
I, for a moment, with a faltering hope
Had read the future. But thy song attun'd
My heart, sweet bird, and gave it back its joy.

So let me be admonish'd, Lord, each time
That faithless heart forgets its trust in Thee !



GERMAN TRADITIONS.¹



THE traditions of a country are always indicative of the character of its people. Those too which they cherish most fondly are not without an historical importance, as they are certain to relate to persons or events whose memory, from certain causes, is very dear to them; or to be connected with a future that is to bring them glory, and with wishes which are then to be fulfilled. These two—the popular feeling and the tradition—are sometimes so accordant, that it would not be quite easy to decide if the one owes its protracted existence to the other, or whether it is the nation's mind which is quickened and kept watchful by the remembrance of such old traditions and their heart-stirring prophecies. And as they always have reference to some name worthy of being remembered with gratitude, or to an act which, if wicked, is sure to have been followed by some striking judgment; such tales of ancient times, though no one strictly believes in their truth, do still tend to inculcate a veneration for good deeds, and to remind us that crime is inevitably overtaken by punishment. Let them, therefore, be

¹ Much of what follows I have taken the liberty of extracting from a chapter which I added to the story of "Holger Danske." See "The Shoes of Fortune, and other Tales."

cherished ; for, despite our knowledge, it is no lack of wisdom to do so.

The most popular of these, and very naturally so, is about the Emperor Frederick Barbarossa. It is the offspring of a most poetical fancy,—the creation of a most poetical time. The events of that period were full of excitement, and roused men's spirits to the highest pitch of enthusiasm : their fiery hearts were still alive to momentary impressions ; and the ardent minds of those days hoped all things. Imagination, too, had the fullest scope ; for then, distance and space not having yet been annihilated, communication was difficult, and the events of some hundred miles off were spoken of with uncertainty. The rumour of the battle or the victory, the death or the coronation, swept by like the wind, and none knew whence it came. Anon appeared some traveller, bringing strange and marvellous accounts. These passed from mouth to mouth, and men's ears could not listen enough. The event of the same year sounded to them as history does to us : what they heard of was to them remote ; and the oftener it was repeated, the more wondrous grew the tale.

But wild as this tradition may be, it has much of solemnity and of interest too ; for with it are associated the destiny and the hopes of a whole people.

This mighty Emperor, this “greatest hero of the Christian world,” who, while he reigned, strove incessantly to make the German empire what it once had been, is said to be still alive. He sits spell-bound in the Kyfhauser Mountain ; nor will that spell be broken until the day of judgment, unless his country be in the dreaddest need. But if such time should come, he will shake off sleep, and will arise and come forth in great

glory and magnificence, the sword of the empire in his hand, and will lead on his people to battle. Should Germany need his aid, he will be sure to appear. He has taken with him the jewels of the empire, and they stand beside him on a marble table. His fiery beard, which still grows during his enchanted sleep, must reach three times round the table before he will awake. As yet, however, it goes round but twice. His sword is in his hand in readiness; and he waits till his day shall come. Some shepherds, 'tis said, have seen him; and he has asked, "Do the ravens still fly round the mountain?" and when answered in the affirmative, he has again rested his head upon his hand, and said, "Then I must sleep for another hundred years!"

And why, you will ask, should the people think that he is still alive? Because the nation could not bring themselves to believe that the great monarch who for near forty years had ruled as German Emperor; who had gone forth with his tens—ay, with his hundreds—of thousands of soldiers to battle; that he—the noble, the magnanimous, the indomitable Emperor,—could possibly have left them for ever.

He was endeared to them by many qualities; they were bound to him by many a tie. They remembered his devotion to his country, and how he gloried in her proud name. They remembered how—at Partenkirchen, overcome with grief at the thought of the danger which was impending over the German name in Italy,—he had sunk on his knee before his powerful kinsman, Henry the Lion, and had implored him by his sworn allegiance and by the ties of blood, "Oh, forsake me not in this hour of peril! THE HONOUR OF GERMANY IS AT STAKE!" And that most glorious day at Venice they

too remembered—ay, glorious though vanquished,—when before the Church of St. Mark he saluted the Pope with the respect which he so well merited, and when he, the Emperor, was received with awe and with songs of thanksgiving. The fame of the Hohenstaufen he had raised so high, that on German ground there seemed nought to equal it. And when, I say, his astounded people were told that he was no more—that they would never again behold his glorious countenance; when they saw the Crusaders coming back from the struggle with the Infidel, and missed the chief who had led them forth in power; when asking for him, they were told he lay entombed in Antioch,—then all were struck dumb with amazement, and men knew not what to think.

The Holy Land was a far-distant country, around which was mystery. The eager questioners about the circumstances of their hero's death heard various accounts; and when men began to wake from their bewilderment, they whispered to each other doubts of what they had been told—doubts of his being really dead! They forgot his mortal nature, and remembered him only as what, to their minds, he had ever been, as a guiding spirit sent by Heaven for the accomplishment of some great destiny. Could he, then, have ceased to be? Could he have left them thus suddenly, and for ever? The more they pondered, the stronger grew the pleasing hope that he was still with his people, and that when the day should come for the fulfilment of his darling scheme—the restoration of the German Empire as it once had been—he would certainly appear and lead his chosen to victory. And in this thought they found consolation. From a hope it became a certainty; and henceforth they clung to this creation

of their fancy with all the devotedness of veneration and of love.

And that it is thus such fanciful creations originate, a circumstance of late occurrence may be quoted as proof. O'Connell, who, for so long a time had been the idol of the Irish people—to whom they looked with the certainty that, while he watched, their interests were safe—leaves them for a time and never more returns. He dies far from them in a foreign land. All were not prepared for such a sudden blow; to some it was so unexpected as to be scarce intelligible; and what is the consequence? That some still doubted if he were really dead.¹ They did not think that, like Barbarossa, he was watching in some enchanted spot till his day should come; but they simply were unable to comprehend that *he* should thus have left them; *he*, whom they were accustomed to look on as intimately associated with their destinies, almost with their very existence. Like Barbarossa, he died not in his own country, but in that of the stranger; and it is this circumstance which tended to foster such belief.

It probably is now entertained by none, and at first even but by few, and those in remoter districts, ignorant of all but what is passing immediately around them; but if entertained by one individual only, it were sufficient for the purpose, to shew, namely, how such traditions arise; and it is interesting inasmuch as it proves that though all else in the world may change, the human heart, with its passions and sympathies, ever remains the same.

¹ My authority is information to that effect contained in a letter from Ireland. But this, it is true, was before the body of the deceased had reached Ireland.—C. B.

Thus we see that the tradition in question is not a tale invented for mere amusement's sake, but rather the visible form which the cherished feeling of a whole people has taken in expressing itself—the tangible shape assumed by the hopes and longings of the nation in giving themselves vent.

You must know, too, that the desire of Barbarossa to re-establish the Holy Roman Empire under one head, makes his memory especially dear to Germany; for there even now men talk of its fulfilment; not, indeed, as an event likely to be accomplished, but as one most ardently to be desired. Still many a heart beats quicker at the mention of such a state of things; there are many who, like Barbarossa, view this as the grandest aim of all human striving.

Can we wonder, then, that the Germans love to dwell on this pleasing vision, connected as it is with so much that is most dear to them? It is like a shadow falling on the stream of time; but the event that casts the shade is behind them, out of sight, and beyond their reach.

And what spot more natural for the abode of such a sleeper than some mountain solitude? Childhood is always poetical; and I do not doubt that those of my young readers who have stood amid the mountain-scenery of England, on the dreary heights of Westmoreland for example, will have felt its influence; and, without being cowards, have experienced a sort of dread at the awful stillness around them. No living thing is there to disturb the slumberer; not a sound is heard of man or beast; for not a creature comes up into that realm of dreariness; the very rocks seem spell-bound, and lying in an enchanted sleep.

Another popular belief relates to Charles the Great, and is contained in the following

*Tradition of the Rhine.*¹

The Rhine—the pale-green Rhine stream !

So mild is there the night ;

There lie the hills and vines in

The moon's soft golden light.

And on the hills advancing,

A tall form ye behold ;

With sword and purple mantle,

And crown of massy gold.

'Tis he ! the Karl, the emperor,

Who once with mighty hand,

In long, long bygone ages,

Did rule the German land.

But he is now arisen,

He cometh from his tomb ;

His purple grapes he blesseth,

And breathes the vine's fresh bloom.

The stream at Rudesheim sparkles,

The moon upon it doth shine,

And a golden bridge it buildeth

Right over the pale-green Rhine.

The Emperor goeth over,

And he moveth slowly on ;

And all along the river

Gives the vines his benison.

¹ From the German of Geibel.

Then home he wends to Aachen,
And sleeps within his tomb,
Till in the new year wakes him
His vines' refreshing bloom.

But we, we fill up the goblet
With juice that sparkles like gold ;
And drink to Germany's heroes,
With hearts of true German mould !

There is a great difference in the two traditions. The only point of resemblance between them is, that the hero of each watches, in his own particular manner, over the land where he once was ruler. It may be found strange that the more important charge should not rather have been ascribed to the greater monarch ; he who had been crowned Emperor of the East. But it is this very circumstance, that he had been so crowned, which is the cause—his wish was fulfilled : while Frederick died, leaving the one great object of his life unattained, and so men thought his mighty spirit could not rest. Moreover, Charles died overcome by the weight of years and in his own land. Of his death there was no doubt : though solemn, it was not wrapped in mystery. All knew the very spot where he was let down into the burial-vault, the imperial crown upon his head, his sword girded round him, and a chalice in his hand ; on his knees the holy Gospel, his shield and the sceptre at his feet. There was no room for doubt. His end,¹ too, was so calm and pious, and indicative of a

¹ It was in the tenth morning hour, so the old chronicles relate, that he closed his life, so rich in great deeds, calm and collected, his hands folded on his breast, with the words, " Lord, into thy hands I commend my spirit."

tranquil spirit—for even the particulars of his last moments have come down to us,—that should the veneration of his people cause them to think there was still some tie between them, it would be as connected with works of peace only; and if he appeared to them, it would be to dispense but the mildest blessings.

In the council, the words of Charles were full of wisdom; on the throne, his majesty and magnificence were most imposing; his vigour and his name spread terror on the field of battle. Yet his great mind occupied itself with humbler objects; he made most useful laws for the promotion of agriculture, he took great interest in all that related to it; and hence perhaps the origin of the belief that, when the vines were in blossom, he glided along the mountain-side to enjoy their fragrance, to behold and to bless their increase.

The very act of blessing, which the tradition ascribes to him, gives better evidence than even sober history could do, of the beneficence and equity of his rule, and of the estimation it was held in by “the people;” those among whom such “Saga” have their origin. As is always the case with what is really good, the memory of his care for the happiness and the necessities of the more lowly among his subjects still lives after a thousand years in the simple rhymes of the peasant, and in the oft-repeated tale which he relates to his children.



THE RAINBOW.



RAINBOW is a beautiful
creation !

Its grand proportions, e'en
its evanescence,

Doth fill the heart with
joyful admiration.

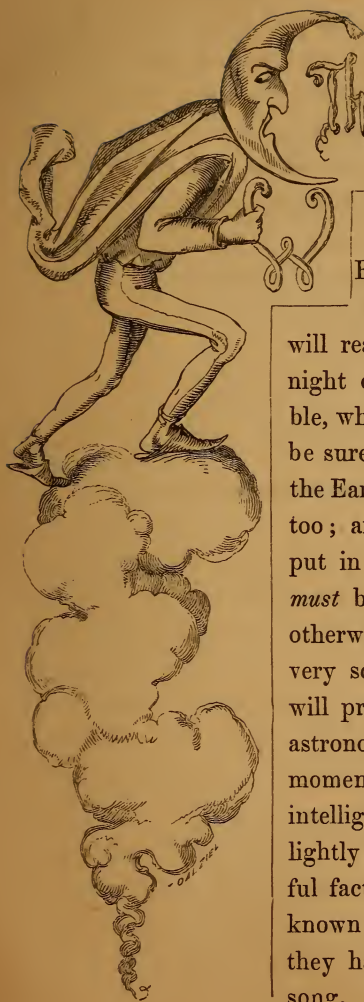
I always go forth to be-
hold its presence,

And every time an undiminish'd sense
Of wonderment and gratitude I feel,
Holy and calm, but not the less intense,
Which seems unconscious in the heart to steal,
And call it to behold what God doth there reveal.

It leans upon a cloud that's filled with thunder,
Making the vision more aerial still :
Darkness is round the vivid arch, but under
Effulgence which the atmosphere doth fill ;
And bank and meadow, river, cornfield, hill,
Lie in the embraces of the blushing light.
The dewy landscape seems to feel the thrill :
The teeming Earth in freshness and delight
Arrayeth herself anew. It is a glorious sight !

And like a seraph winging its clear way
Up into heaven, smiling and still ascending,
The lucid bow now higher doth display
Itself; then lovingly its brightness blending
With scowling clouds which o'er it are impending,
All-suddenly the gloom dissolves in rain,
In dewy, dropping light :—and hither bending,
It cometh downward to the earth again,
And gliding moveth on majestic o'er the plain.





The Half Moon



ERE I to ask any of those thousands who, of course, will read this book, why the other night only half the Moon was visible, what a mass of learning I should be sure to hear! They would want the Earth to help them, and the Sun too; and all the spheres would be put in commotion to shew that it *must* be so and so, and cannot be otherwise. Now the Lithuanians, a very scientific people, and, as you will presently see, deeply versed in astronomy, explain the matter in a moment, and in a way too that is intelligible to every body. And so lightly do they think of this wonderful fact, which has, doubtless, been known to them for centuries, that they have merely recorded it in a song. How Herschel would stare

if he could hear their solution of the question ! For, great mathematician as he was, no such thing ever once occurred to him ; nor will it, I am sure, to any of those learned men who now are certain to study this book, since its pages contain so astounding an addition to science. So I will tell the secret at once, and without further preface ; only stating, however, that among the northern nations, as is the case too in Germany, the Moon is of the masculine gender.

You ask :

Why comes the Moon in half his pride,
Shining so pale and with so weak a ray ?

And the answer is :

The Morning Star's affianced bride
He hath enticed and carried away :
So THE SUN, WHEN HE CAME, WITHOUT ANY ADO
HEW'D THE FACE OF THE COZENING KNAVE IN TWO.





AMID the stormy waves of the North Sea rises an island, in appearance like a bastion of red rock, and equally distant from the coast of Germany and from Denmark's shore. It is adventurous Helgoland.

This rock, whose upper surface is, at most, three quarters of a German mile in circumference, forms towards the sea a red wall of rock, full of clefts and cavities, into which the Ocean thrusts its greedy tongue, and makes in it every year a more or less capacious breach. Separate masses of stone, with the most romantic, fantastic shapes, there remain like bulwarks; and the strangest forms, into which chance has fashioned them, afford to Fancy most delightful play. Now one seems to behold towers on whose summits gigantic warders

keep guard with shield and lance ; now one sees triumphal arches with lofty domes, now a castle with gateway and casement, now a cloister and chapel ; and even the mourning petrified “ monk ”¹ is not wanting. On the upper part of the island, potatoes are cultivated to such an extent that from afar the island appears like a red floating table with a green cloth spread out upon it. On the south-east declivity lies the town, where the inhabitants dwell, and where the visitors who come there to bathe take up their abode. It looks exactly, situated as it is below and against the rock, like those pretty things of wood or pasteboard made at Nuremburg or Berchtholdsgaden, representing generally a mine, or the history of the Passion, with innumerable little neat houses, busy workmen, and endless figures, and which in southern Germany are called *Krippenspiel*. Many nice houses, only one story high, however,—one of which is inhabited by the governor of the island, a retired English naval officer,—the church, the public reading-room, Madame Mohr’s hotel, a few other houses belonging to private individuals, a lighthouse, and an observatory, are the few buildings which are visible. The rest are neat, clean, but small, fishermen’s cottages, built very close together. A long broad stair that winds along the rocky declivity connects the lower part of the little town with the upper, and many paths provided with balustrades lead across some of the crags. From the activity which, besides the industrious habits of the inhabitants, the presence of the bathing visitors brings with it, at a distance one fancies that it is an ant-hill which is seen. On the whole island are only a few stunted trees in a square before the public room ; and the fields and gardens, which for

¹ A rock so called.

the most part furnish potatoes, are barely sufficient to afford a few cows and sheep the necessary subsistence. But poor and needy as vegetable and animal nature is on this duodecimo island, it is rich in grand sea-dramas, the ocean, the northern tempests, rocks and cliffs, waves and clouds, presenting alternately the inner and the outer scene illumined by sunshine, moonlight, the glimmer of the stars, aurora borealis, or the lurid gleam of the lightning.

This rocky isle, and a sandbank in front of it called the Downs, about half a mile in circumference, divided from Helgoland proper by a current a quarter of a mile broad, and which forms the bathing-place of the visitors, is all that the sea has left of a continent which was originally of importance, and which was once connected with the Danish coast. As late as the 12th century it was a large, considerable tract of land; and in the 15th, Helgoland counted fourteen parishes and several market-towns and villages. I have spoken with an old man who remembers the time when the Downs were connected with the island, so that at low water one could go across dry-footed. The sea makes yearly new incursions, and overflows some furlongs more of the Downs; yearly some cliffs tumble into the waves; and in some ten years more many of the sturdy bastions of rock will have melted away; while in a few centuries their name hardly will have remained.

When by degrees the sea had separated the large island of Helgoland from the continent, nothing remained but the present town, inhabited by skippers, fishermen, and pilots. Far and wide they were renowned as excellent seamen—in England, Scotland, Norway, and Denmark—and they found a scanty, but still sufficient, livelihood. From Helgoland one

commands at once the mouth of the Elbe, of the Ems, and the Weser; it is therefore easy to understand how much importance England lays on the possession of this island, which, during the war, was, like a little Malta of the north, always a station for several ships of war. The great extent to which smuggling was carried under the continental system powerfully contributed to the advancement of the small population of Helgoland. Here was the emporium, the depot from which the surrounding coasts were supplied; in which employment the far-famed seamen of Helgoland displayed, to their profit doubtless, no small activity. Even now, this adventurous occupation, which demands, at the same time, boldness, cunning, determination, and perseverance, where body and mind, in constant danger and exertion, grow steeled and strengthened, has left upon them a peculiar imprint; just as is the case with the Contrabandista of Catalonia, Andalusia, and the Pyrenees. This has descended to the younger race, and these, as well as their colleagues on the other side the Pyrenean Mountains, might afford original types for many a romantic creation. Here, as on the coast of Norway, Nature rears man quite differently to what she does elsewhere. Accustomed from youth upwards to combat with the elements, intimate with danger, and used to but few necessities, at the same time that a feeling for freedom and a consciousness of physical and moral strength is developed, there developes itself also a feeling of confidence in God, of respect for the laws, of reverence for age and experience, as well as strict moral conduct in the relations of family life.

Thus the people of Helgoland are honest and simple-hearted, with free speech and open countenances: sometimes

they shake your hand rather roughly; and the numerous visits of the bathing-visitors have gradually developed their selfishness. Yet a friendly complaisance and a readiness to assist always predominates: in their ways and manner they remind one of the Tyrolese; they are, however, less gay. Their occupation as sailors, fishermen, lootsen or pilots, being always on the perilous ocean, has given them a quiet resoluteness, but at the same time a poetical touch of contempt of death, which they only at times lay aside when over their glass, or when dancing in the hostelry at the sign of "The Red Waters."

The women and girls are pictures of beauty, and wear a national costume which is very becoming, the peculiar distinctive mark of which is a coloured kerchief in the form of a turban, wound round the head in a particular manner. German and Helgolandish are spoken in the island; which latter is a dialect composed of Danish, English, and German.

It is an interesting sight, when the pilot-bell announces that a ship is in danger, or that the aid of a pilot or some other assistance is wanted. From all sides the pilots hasten to the shore: old experienced hoary-headed seamen, strong gigantic men, and blooming stout-hearted youths. Here in the pilot-house the names of those are signified who are to man the boat to carry aid to the vessel in distress. Welcome as such nomination is in calm weather and with a quiet sea—for the pilots are exceedingly well paid—as threatening and dangerous is it in storm and fog; for no pilot, whose turn it is to go, dare draw back, or refuse to put off to sea, under penalty of losing his rights as a pilot, and of suffering universal contempt. In such cases it is affecting to see

how maidens and wives hasten to the spot; one bringing the husband his thick sailor's jerkin, another carrying the leather nor'-wester for her lover; a little boy, himself half a Triton already, drags along a pair of high fishing-boots for his father. The farewell is then always short, but solemn and affecting. A pressure of the hand, a tear in the eye of the wife; and while those appointed for the adventure dress themselves and get ready, the others, bare-legged or provided with mighty boots, shove off the boat, which the huge waves, roaring and foaming for fifty or sixty paces over the shore, dash forward to meet; while seamen, assistants, spectators, and those interested in the event, are covered by the spray. Now the boat is on the sea; you see it lifted up as high as a house, and then dive down again in the abyss; at last a dark spot alone is visible, rising and falling at intervals, and gradually this too is lost in the foggy distance. Women and girls, the grey old seamen, and the children, remain on the shore, sometimes waving their handkerchiefs in anxious farewells to those who are gone. Sometimes the boat remains absent several hours, sometimes whole days—that is to say, if it moors off the strange vessel. The inhabitants, however, are so accustomed to these grand sights, and have such confidence in their own skill, strength, and practice; they are from infancy so intimate with the fearful element, and have, so to say, grown up in companionship with the waves, and been suckled with salt water,—that to them all the perils with which the angry sea threatens the stranger appear much less terrible. I am pretty well accustomed to the ocean; nevertheless, I have made voyages with Helgoland seamen, amongst others one to the island of Föhr, when I should have lost all pre-

sence of mind if the calm and the unchangeable coolness of my companions had not forced me, for shame's sake, to conceal my fears by the most complete self-restraint.

When the equinoctial storms are raging, it is with much difficulty and great danger that the coast can be approached, and the breakers passed which rush towards it from all sides. Communication with the mainland is then cut off for days together. One then sees at evening, wives, maidens, old men, and children, assemble on the shore or upon the rocky heights, anxiously awaiting the return of the boats that are still out at sea. Here and there an old experienced skipper, who has grown grey in a hundred tempests, looking through his telescope; every one listening awaits his decision, for the unpractised and naked eye is easily deceived. At last he confirms the belief that the dark spots which shew themselves on the horizon are really the vessels in question. Then what joy, what a happy throng is on the beach, what impatient restlessness! till at length the long-wished-for approach nearer and nearer, and land at last, and moor their boats. What a welcoming, what blissful enjoyment! All is finally unshipped and disembarked, and the brave seamen are led home by wife and child, by friend and sweetheart, amid loud rejoicings.

Among such a people, and amid such occupations, a certain poetry of life, an elevated view of nature, and a certain feeling of self-respect, must develope themselves; and if even at times they appear coarse and rude, they can never be vulgar.

I have a little story to tell about Helgoland. It is short and simple, and yet it is a drama in which the tempest and the ocean have taken upon themselves the tragic parts.

In the hotel of the excellent Madame R——, a party of about twenty persons assembled daily to dinner. As is the case in all society, it was a material want, an appetite, namely, whetted by exercise and the sea-air, and the satisfying this want by eating, which had brought all these persons together. By degrees various poetical impulses were united with this prosaic tendency, and conspired to make this *coterie* the most agreeable point of union in the whole island during the bathing season.

The dinner at Madame R——'s was served by female Helgoland attendants, as is the case in the south of Germany. And who has ever been at Munich, Linz, or Gratz, that does not remember them with pleasure? In neatness, cleanliness, and activity, those of Helgoland are in no way inferior to their colleagues of southern Germany; they are only more inhuman, and have hearts like the rocks of their island.

Among these female cup-bearers was a tall slender girl, whose great beauty and really seemly grace could not fail to strike every one; and whom Helgoland might boldly have sent as specimen to a general exhibition of gyneological productions, without any fear of being left behind in the competition. TRINE, so this maiden was called, in her Helgolandish dress, with the peculiar headgear, the tight boddice, short sleeves, which left uncovered the most beautiful, fullest arms, and the short looped-up dress, was most lovely to behold.

From under the most beautiful black eyebrows and long silken lashes, which gave her a serious, sometimes indeed a melancholy expression, looked forth, like two stars in a stormy night, the most lovely blue eyes. Trine was withal ever polite and friendly; but as soon as she remarked that any

one was on the point of forgetting her part of attendant in order to pay attention to her, she knew how, by a certain dignity, and a very modest but befitting demeanour, to keep such troublesome suitors within bounds.

I was sitting alone one afternoon in the public-room reading the newspaper, when Trine brought me a light for my cigar, which had just gone out. She busied herself near me, grew less and less reserved, and at last sat down near me, twitching the corner of her apron in an embarrassed manner, and laid her hand on mine. However, I did not put my paper aside, nor did I let my cigar go out again, and only looked askance over the edge of the gazette. But Trine looked at me, from under her silken lashes, with her large blue eyes, with such open-heartedness, that I at last said, "What's the matter, Trine?"

"O God!" said she; "much, very much!" and a few tears, like pure pearly dew, hung on her eyelids.

"And is there no help, Trine?"

"Oh, yes; if *you* did but choose!"

"If *I* choose?"

"Oh, I am so poor," answered she; and my purse wandered as gently as possible into her apron. But Trine looked at me astonished, and placed the purse on the table. "What shall I do with your money? lend it me you surely will not; I have not earned it; and for a present it is too much. You rich people," continued she, rather pettishly as she rose, "always think one wants your money; ah, that is not what I meant; and I hoped you would help or counsel me; for you, of all the gentlemen, have always been so kind and friendly to me. Now do not be angry—and pray aid me. My Steffen—"

“ And pray who is Steffen ?” I asked.

“ Oh, he is an honest, worthy, and,” she added rather archly, “ a young and very handsome Helgolander. Now look you, good, kind sir, we have loved each other for many years. When Steffen was still a little boy, and went out fishing with his father, I, as a little girl, used to play at being his wife, and waited on the beach with the basket and the keg till he returned ; and Steffen’s father, too, thought I was then his son’s little wife, and should some day be his grown-up one. But Steffen’s father is dead now, and mine also ; they were both very poor ; but we love each other so dearly, and we will marry still, if it please God. We have saved a little sum, and in two or three years we shall be able to buy Peter Huysen’s, the fisherman’s, cottage. We might think of doing so now, but I must support my old mother, and so I dare not give up my business here in the house, by which I get more in one summer than in the whole year besides. Two years is certainly a long time, and then I shall not be pretty any longer ; but Steffen will like me still, even though I don’t please other people. Now my only consolation of an evening was, when I was no longer wanted here, to go and sit with my old mother, where Steffen too used to come when he returned from the sea ; and there we used to make plans for our future housekeeping ; and in such an evening one forgets many a hard day. For you do not know how hard it is when one is the child of respectable parents, and has learned a little—for my father was the schoolmaster here—to be obliged to serve in an hotel. Not only the scolding, calling, sending hither and thither, the hard labour, the want of quiet, is difficult to get accustomed to, but the envy and ill-nature of

the other maids, when any of the gentlemen are friendly ; so many unbecoming remarks, so many an unkind word ! Sometimes I have half a mind to quit the service ; but Madame R—— will not let me go ; and she pays me so well, that it would be foolish as well as ungrateful if I were to leave the good Madame R——, who had my mother taken care of when she was so ill two years ago. And so I stay, and spend my evenings at home with my mother in her cottage.”

“ With Steffen,” I added maliciously.

“ Yes ; with Steffen,” she continued, without the least embarrassment. “ But now Madame R—— pretends I ought to spend the evenings here, and that more visitors are coming ; and so I should not see Steffen any more ; for Madame R—— says I am a silly creature to care so much for a rude fisherman, and she cannot bear to hear people talk of it, and would herself get something better for me. Now she thinks a great deal of you ; and if you, good, kind sir, would speak a favourable word for me, she will let me go down to my mother’s house, or even let Steffen come up here !”

“ A pretty commission !” murmured I ; “ but I will speak to Madame R—— ; and what is more, I will speak with the captain of the pilots ; he will give your Steffen employment at the docks, and then you may marry as soon as you can.”

“ Oh, dear, kind gentleman !” cried Trine ; “ oh, I really could give you a kiss, I like you so much, and from my very heart— !”

“ And I will allow it willingly !” said Steffen ; who meanwhile had come in unobserved, and had heard the latter part of the conversation.

The same evening at table we made a collection for the

young couple ; and with the addition of a few louis d'or, the sum was sufficient for Trine to begin housekeeping. The happiness of both, the accomplishment of which they had looked for only in some years, was now quite near. On the following Sunday they were married, and fourteen days after I already saw them, a wonderfully fine pair, going to church as man and wife.

A few months passed. As to myself, fate had driven me about meanwhile. When fencing with one of our Brazilian fellow-boarders, I got a lunge in the shoulder from a pointed foil, and this kept me for some weeks at the island of Föhr. Thence I coasted about Norway, occupied with shooting seals. When I came back to Helgoland, summer, it is true, was over, but not, as it seemed, the honeymoon of the young couple, who appeared only to love each other more. The equinoctial storms already raged ; they tore up the sea so that it dashed its towering waves against the rocky wall of the island ; but here, in this happy wedded union, the fresh spring air of love whispered always. Then came the time when the Helgoland fishermen carry the greater part of the produce of their toils in casks to Hamburg. For such transports, at which time all sorts of other wares are also taken, and different articles brought back from Hamburg in return, a quantity of large sailing-boats join together, and make the voyage to and fro in company. So was it this time ; and Steffen, as one of the most skilful and tried sailors, and whose growing prosperity increased his interest in the undertaking, could not on any account be absent. After a tender parting, he embarked with the rest for opulent luxurious Hamburg, to return in a few days. In tears his young wife took leave, and only

Steffen's solemn promise shortly to return to that same spot on the shore was able to calm her sorrow. In gloomy apprehension she saw the little flotilla sail away, and continued peering into the hazy distance till the last sails had vanished in fog and cloud.

A glorious night followed. With flattering looks of brightness the Moon wooed the Ocean, which received them, like an ardent lover, in her glittering bosom. The little stars winked so friendly, like the innocent eyes of children, peeping into the watery mirror; and the larger ones sent their carbuncle rays downwards from the blue heaven, like messengers of the departed loved ones who now dwell above, and sometimes greet the earth when it is sleeping, and men when they dream, with a portion of their heavenly brightness. It was a night of love, in which the heavens wooed the sea—not the Mediterranean, however, the glowing lover of the south, who is anointed with spices, and odorous of jasmine and roses; but the North Sea, the stern, proud, yet affectionate bride, in whose depths glows endless love with all her wonders, and whose billowy longing even the icebergs of the pole cannot chill. Yes, it was a night of love for nature! But, alas, how near is love to sorrow! and the sea renounces not its deceit; often with tepid waves it embraces and whispers softly words of love to the mariner, whose corpse it a few hours after hurls with cold disdain from its bed on to the sandy beach.

The next day was less serene. A strong north-east wind rose, and the sea grew agitated. The sun set behind red flaming clouds, whose purple mantle, like bloody banners, hung down in the firmament; and afar the northern tempest howled, driving the black clouds before it. The sea grew

more agitated—on the furthestmost horizon one saw the waves, like gigantic serpents, tumbling onwards, and the breakers covered the shore with their white yeast. A frightful hurricane arose, which lasted the whole night; air and water seemed battling with each other in fearful uproar. The Storm howled his war-song, and the Ocean bellowed a battle-cry in answer. The clouds, as they hastened by, shook down hail and rain and snow; the rocks appeared to tremble, for the storm tore large masses of stone and earth away, and the roofs and walls of the little Helgoland dwellings creaked and groaned. The night passed, but not the storm, which rather increased towards morning, and raved on the whole day with unabated fury. I had often had opportunities of seeing the Mediterranean in uproar, as well as the Black Sea, which is so often visited by tempests; but I was forced to confess to myself, that, in comparison with these grand scenes, all that I had hitherto witnessed was but as *tempêtes dans un verre d'eau*.

The day passed in anxious suspense. Many spars and bits of wreck which were cast upon the shore shewed how fatal this night had been for those ships which had been out at sea. But one could discern by various marks that these were not wrecks of Helgoland vessels.

One may imagine the apprehension, bordering on despair, of those of the Helgoland population that had remained behind, and which consisted chiefly of old men, women, and children; nearly all the robust men and youths having gone to sea. Every family counted at least one relation among the crews of those vessels that had sailed to Hamburg, and who, it is evident, were in the greatest danger. The storm lasted

three days. At length the north-wind had vented its rage on the ocean; the waves, it is true, still writhed, murmuring, from the lashing they had received, but they only groaned, and gradually grew calm. In the sky the clouds retreated; and finally the sun shone warm and cheerily from the blue above, like a tender mother mildly consoling the waters,—those disobedient weeping children who had felt the chastising rod of their angry father Boreas.

When the weather permitted, the remaining inhabitants of Helgoland hastened to the projecting crag on the shore, anxiously awaiting the return of the flotilla; for then only would they be able, with certainty, to appease their fears. Some old experienced sea-captains and skippers looked out upon the horizon with their glasses; beside them stood blooming women and maidens in painful expectation; while little boys, reckless as childhood is, splashed about in the pools of water, and with little boats of cork played at “storm;” already yearning after the perils of the future.

At last, towards evening, an old captain discovered some specks on the horizon. One was soon convinced that they were vessels steering towards Helgoland; and in an hour more, one was certain that they were the returning boats. Yet one could not count them with exactness, and there was still the fear that some might be missing. All uncertainty vanished at length, for the full number was there; and one only had yet to tremble for the individual friends that were on board them. Nearer and nearer came the boats, and as the distance between them and the shore diminished, so also the apprehension and uncertainty; and when they finally were moored, all waded out to meet them. The women waved

their handkerchiefs, the men their straw-hats or leathern nor'-westers, and the boys tossed their caps up in the air. All cried, called, beckoned, and rejoiced.

After a time all the boatmen landed; each one was received by father, mother, wife, child, or sweetheart, who hung on their arm, and kissed and embraced the dear ones now restored to them; the children crept through their legs and clung to their knees, and the men shook heartily the strong rough hands, and all hastened home to the friendly hearth. Only by the greatest exertions, and through the oft-tried coolness and skill of these excellent seamen, had the little flotilla escaped the threatened destruction. Every family conducted its own members home in triumph, as each one hastened to his own fireside. Gradually the beach grew empty; one young woman only hastened to and fro along the shore in anxious haste, seeking and inquiring. It was Trine. Beside each skiff she stood expecting that Steffen would step out and sink in her arms. But in vain; from one boat after the other the crew departed, and no Steffen appeared. The shore grew more and more lonely, the greater part of those who had been expected were already gone to their homes, and in vain she still sought among the last comers for the friend of her heart. "My God! I surely cannot be the *only one* that Thou wilt visit with affliction on this day of rejoicing!" exclaimed the poor wife, her voice almost choked with weeping. And yet it was so. Steffen, the brave Steffen, had ventured, in a moment of peril, to get upon a spar in order to hoist a sail, when a wave washed him away, before any attempt to save him could be made; the more so, as the accident happened in the dark, which rendered all endeavours more fruit-

less. No one dared to tell poor Trine of the sad truth; all hoped that she would guess the melancholy reality. But Trine asked no more; but the following and the next following day she stood pale, and still, and weeping, on the shore, from morning until evening, silent and expecting. She did not speak; sometimes only she would say, "The only one! my God, I the only one!—and why then I, just I!" and she whispered, while she smiled most wofully, as though she were imparting a great secret; "But I know that he will come again—he will come back, for he promised me; but he will come alone, and at night quite quietly when it is dark!" as though the remembrance of the blissful past were blended in her poor bewildered brain with the consciousness of present woe.

We feel certain presentiments, and there is a strange coincidence of outward circumstances with the visions of the mind; and it seems as though sometimes the material world was obliged to fulfil that for which the spiritual world gives security. It is strange, but although Steffen was lost many miles from Helgoland, quite near Cuxhaven, yet the current brought his corpse back to the beloved island; and on the fifth day the waves laid it on the beach, not far from the spot where he had taken leave of his wife. One morning Trine was found sitting beside Steffen's body, with a wisp of straw in her hand, brushing away the flies, and repeating lowly, "Let him sleep; he is so weary. I well knew that he would come back; but he is tired, and he was obliged to swim so far: oh, let him sleep!"

They buried Steffen in the churchyard of Helgoland. All the seafaring men followed the much-loved and respected

young man to the grave ; and the poetical fancy of the North found no small matter for consideration in the truly wonderful return of the body, which in death had still kept the promise of the living man, and which fain would rest in its native land near the fondly cherished wife, and not far away in the cold waves. From that time forward Trine's grief grew calmer and more mild ; but her intellect never returned. I found her once, a long time afterwards, sitting in the churchyard beside Steffen's grave, with a bundle of straw in her arms, which she was nursing. She stole towards me on tiptoe, and with a friendly smile extending her hand, made a sign that I was to step gently. " I am rocking the child to sleep, lest it should awaken my husband : I have already told you that he is come back, as he promised me he would ; but he came alone, quite alone ; not with the others, who had deserted him ! But he does not want them—the others ! Yet they should not have deserted him. Between ourselves, I do not like them since, and we cannot agree together ! But he was forced to swim so far, my poor Steffen ! And now he is so tired and weary, and he sleeps so long and soundly ! O God ! too long, much too long ; for I almost fear that he will not wake at all ! And when he arrived he was so cold ; I pressed him so lovingly to my heart, yet I could not warm him ! And only think, I have not yet been able to shew him his child ! How sweetly it smiles, does it not ? And how like him it is ! They told me, the unkind people, that it is dead ; just as they said of Steffen, that he was drowned, that I might not wait for him any longer on the shore ; and yet how angry he would have been, if he had not found me there when he arrived ! Oh, I was speaking of my child ! Yes, they wanted to take that too ; but

I have kept it, and it grows day by day, and it has so many pretty ways ; only look how it is smiling at you !”

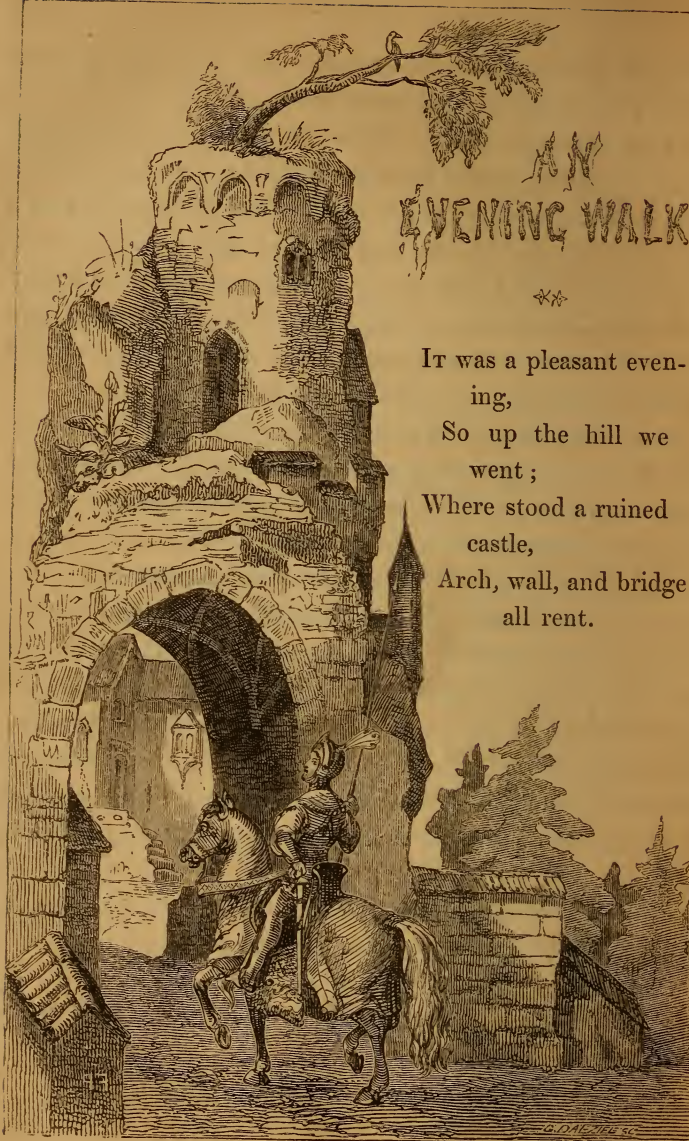
I am an old trooper, slashed, and hacked, and scarred ; I have lived among the Cossacks and all sorts of marauders ; have held intercourse with Bedouins and Contrabandista ; I have seen storms, revolts, and battles ; have passed through many of the trials of life, and am pretty well hardened against momentary impressions ; —but I must confess that I now grew weak as a child, and the tears rolled down over my cheeks. I could not support such misery, and soon withdrew.

Some months later, I came to Helgoland again. The red rock was no longer hung with green,—it was covered with snow as with a fresh white pall. I asked immediately after Trine ; and was pointed to the churchyard. I hastened thither ; but this time I did not find her ; for she, too, now sleeps, long and soundly, beneath the snow, beside her Steffen. When nature’s white shroud has disappeared, her grave will deck itself with fragrant violets and with fresh green turf ; and this is the uniform of hope. It signifies resurrection. And their love will arise from out the earth, just as death was forced to surrender the body from the waves. And then both will sleep no more ; but will awake, and live, and love each other for ever.

This is the story of the fair Trine and of poor Steffen, as I noted it down at Helgoland in the year 18**.

Green is the land,
Red the rocks, and
White is the sand :

These are the colours of Helgoland !



AN EVENING WALK.



It was a pleasant even-
ing,
So up the hill we
went ;
Where stood a ruined
castle,
Arch, wall, and bridge
all rent.

But there was still one gateway
The storms had not thrown down,
'Twas broken though, and covered
With golden moss and brown.

And through the broken archway
The bright-blue sky looked in ;
And up on high a birch-tree
Did wave its branches thin.

And all was still and silent,
Except the bees' low hum,
And our steps on the drawbridge,
As o'er it we did come.

When from the tangled bushes
That now half-filled the moat,
A startled blackbird darted,
But uttered not a note.

My little comrade stopping,
Did gently press my hand ; —
Before us the old archway
All sunlit there did stand.

“ Now only think, if suddenly
A knight should there appear,
Towards us slowly riding,
While we are standing here.

And on beneath the archway
With ivy crowned o'er,
And then at last should vanish
Out at the great old door !

Would you not like to see it ?
Oh, think how fine 'twould be ;
The knight in shining armour,
And riding silently !

And on his head a helmet,
And in his hand a lance ;
And then his plume of feathers,
How it would nod and dance !

D'ye think you would be frightened ?
I think that *I* should be :
But yet I wish 'twould happen,—
That were a sight to see !”

Thus on we went, still talking
Of knights and prancing steeds,
Of dungeons and of castles,
And valiant knightly deeds ;

Scarce noticing the chafer,
That noisily hummed by ;
Not heeding e'en the first stars,
Just twinkling in the sky.

And where on high the birch-tree
Did wave its branches thin,
Athrough the mouldering archway
The moon was looking in.

And all the ground was silvered,
The old walls all were grey,
And all now looked quite different
From what it did by day.

And from beneath the lindens
The glow-worm's light did peep :
In half an hour after
My little friend did sleep ;

Of knights in armour dreaming,
Such as he wished to see ;
A-riding in the moonlight
All still and silently.



186 Strand, November 1847.

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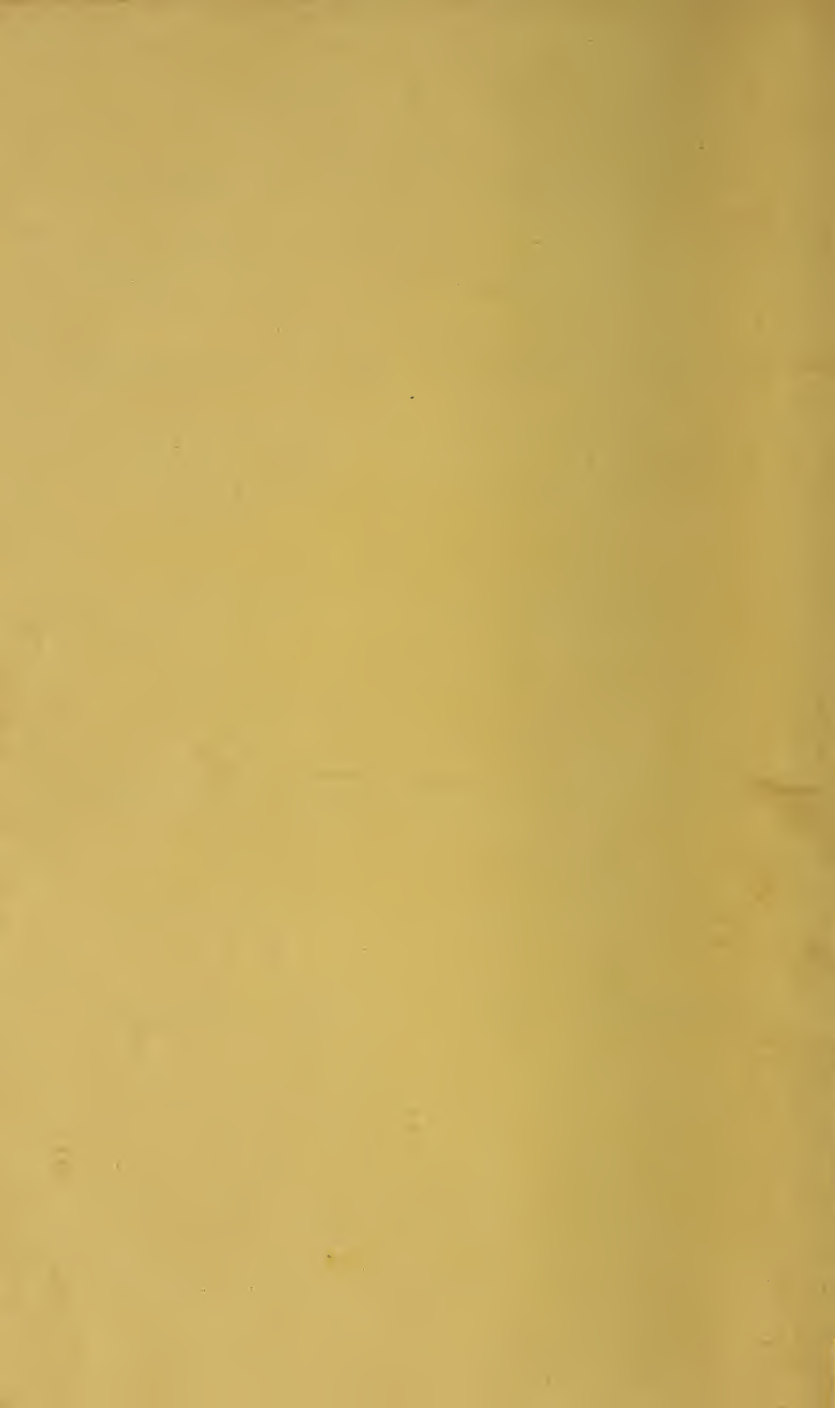
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